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Viewing cable 06KABUL3934,

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06KABUL3934	2006-09-03 08:08	2010-12-02 21:09	UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY	Embassy Kabul

Appears in these articles:
<http://www.spiegel.de>

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VZCZCXRO3979
PP RUEHDBU RUEHIK RUEHYG
DE RUEHBUL #3934/01 2460836
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 030836Z SEP 06
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2240
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RHMCSUU/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC//JF/UNMA//
RHMCSUU/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC//J3//
RHMFIUU/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
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RHMFIUU/JICCEN MACDILL AFB FL
RHMFIUU/COMSOCCEN MACDILL AFB FL
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 2936
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 6265
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA 1616
UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 05 KABUL 003934

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SA/FO, SA/A, S/CR, SA/PAB, S/CT, EUR/RPM

STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG

NSC FOR AHARRIMAN

OSD FOR BREZINSKI

CENTCOM FOR CG CFC-A, CG CJTF-76, POLAD

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Viewing cable 07KABUL1132, ONDCP DIRECTOR WALTERSâ€™ MARCH 17-20 VISIT TO

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
07KABUL1132	2007-04-06 10:10	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO7063

PP RUEHDBU RUEHPW

DE RUEHBUL #1132/01 0961045

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

P 061045Z APR 07

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7308

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEHOND/DIR ONDCP WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 KABUL 001132

SIPDIS

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SIPDIS

STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG
OSD FOR KIMMITT
ONDCP FOR DIRECTOR
STATE FOR INL/AP, INL/FO, AND INR
CIA FOR CNC

EO 12958 DECL: 04/04/2017

TAGS SNAR, KCRM, AF

SUBJECT: ONDCP DIRECTOR WALTERS'S MARCH 17-20 VISIT TO
AFGHANISTAN

REF: KABUL 1014

Classified By: DCM Richard B. Norland for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: Director of the Office of Drug Control Policy John Walters visited Afghanistan March 17-20 to discuss with senior Afghan and international officials this year's progress on reducing the poppy crop. Senior ISAF officials told Walters that although eradicating poppy would, in their estimation, increase the security threat, it needed to be done and they would be as supportive as their mandate allowed. ISAF is also increasingly convinced of the links between narcotics traffickers and insurgents. Senior Afghan government officials agreed with the need to take strong action against growers and traffickers but acknowledged that widespread corruption

and the weakness of the justice system made that difficult. Many made the point that considerable progress in other parts of the country was at risk of being overshadowed by the lack of progress in Helmand. They all emphasized the importance of increasing development aid, and pitched the idea of funneling more assistance through government ministries instead of international contractors. Lastly, Walters visited the Afghan Eradication Force base camp in Helmand, where discussions with Deputy Minister of Interior for Counter-narcotics Mohammad Daud and local elders illustrated how difficult it is for the central government to exert its authority on controversial issues. END SUMMARY.

KARZAI NEEDS TO TAKE ACTION

¶2. (C/NOFORN) ONDCP Director Walters met with COM ISAF General McNeill in Kabul, and separately with RC South Commander Major General Van Loon (Dutch) in Kandahar. McNeill told Walters there had been a lot of action on counter-narcotics, but little progress. He was particularly dismayed by the British effort. They had made a mess of things in Helmand, their tactics were wrong, and the deal that London cut on Musa Qala had failed. That agreement opened the door to narco-traffickers in that area, and now it was impossible to tell the difference between the traffickers and the insurgents. The British could do a lot more, he said, and should, because they have the biggest stake.

¶3. (C/NOFORN) McNeill thought the missing ingredient in the counter-narcotics effort was Karzai. Despite some public statements, he had failed to take a real stand. Karzai needed to keep his support base happy, and as a result, he placated many of those involved in the drug business, especially in the west and south of the country. However, by not taking the issue on, Karzai was tacitly signaling his OK for poppy production. While the international community could come down harder on Karzai, McNeill observed that for the time being, Karzai is the only one who can lead, so for now we have to ride with him. The counter-narcotics effort has to have an Afghan face, and that is going to take time.

HIGH VALUE TARGETS

¶4. (C) To Walters's question on going after high value targets, McNeill said it was necessary to prosecute a few to keep faith with the general public. But he was skeptical it would have any real effect on the trafficking networks, as those arrested would simply be replaced by others. McNeill described having been called to answer questions before the Afghan parliament, and said that during the session, the parliament had come down hard on MOI Zarar for not doing more on narcotics arrests and basic law enforcement. McNeill also criticized the timing and conduct of eradication, arguing that farmers eradicated in the spring would be fighting by summer. He asserted that Governor-led eradication was extremely disorganized and said that, for now, eradicators are only going where the local power brokers allow

them to go. He suggested that there be a more direct link between eradication and provision of assistance, so that a compact with the people could be created.

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VAN LOON AGREEMENT ON TIMING, NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

¶5. (C) In a meeting the next day in Kandahar, RC South commander Major General Van Loon, who was accompanied for part of the meeting by Kandahar Governor Asadullah, argued that provision of alternative livelihoods needs to start much earlier. Once the poppy seeds are in the ground, there is no option for the farmer. Provision of licit crops and other assistance needed to start early in the summer, before farmers made planting decisions. Both Asadullah and Van Loon thought cooperation among the central government, assistance providers, and eradication elements was poor. While farmers are promised alternatives, they do not often see results on a local level. There needs to be more active involvement with local councils, and there should be more of a direct link between development assistance and non-cultivation of poppy. Van Loon suggested this approach would work in Kandahar, where farmers were making their own decisions on what to grow, but would probably not work in Helmand, where large-scale traffickers were in charge.

GOVERNOR-LED ERADICATION AND PROBLEMS OF

CORRUPTION

¶6. (C) Following Asadullah's departure, Van Loon agreed that the Governor was making progress on eradication, but he took issue with his targets and methods. Asadullah was using Afghan Police (ANP) to do eradication, which further damaged the already corrupt reputation of the police among average people, and allowed Asadullah to pocket the funding he had been given to hire local labor to carry out eradication. The employment of ANP in eradication means they are not out in the community performing their security functions. In addition, Van Loon said Asadullah has been careful to eradicate only those fields not controlled by powerful people in the Province.

¶7. (C/NF) Van Loon was somewhat defensive in discussing the failure of Uruzgan Governor Monib to take any action on eradication. He argued that the security situation was outside the Governor's control, and prevented him from moving around much. In addition, the province is extremely poor, and so until more alternative livelihoods are available, the international community should not push too hard on eradication. He said that Monib understood the need to do something, and plans were now being drawn up with the British Embassy Drugs team and the Ministry of Counter-narcotics.

¶8. (C) RC South has begun developing information on ties between traffickers, insurgents, and government officials. They recognize that going after corrupt officials may be too difficult, given the delicate tribal and other balances needed to keep the Afghan government generally intact. But they hope to use the increasing connections between traffickers and insurgents to their advantage; the latter are a legitimate target for ISAF, while pursuing the former is not within ISAF's direct mandate.

VISIT TO HELMAND

¶9. (C) On March 20 Director Walters visited the INL-funded Afghan Eradication Force's (AEF) forward operating base in Helmand. During the visit he discussed Helmand eradication with Deputy Interior Minister Daud and members of the provincial eradication commission, who represented tribal elders and the poppy growing communities in the operating areas of the AEF base. Walters told Daud and the commission members that he was disappointed with the recent lack of eradication progress in areas with the highest concentration of poppy cultivation, like Marja sub-district. The commission responded that Helmand needs time--a few growing seasons--to wean farmers away from dependence on the poppy crop. Walters acknowledged that eradication affects farmers, but he reminded the commission that Helmand enjoys other

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agricultural options and has the potential to become Afghanistan's "bread basket." All farmers, he said, know that growing poppy is illegal, and they must also learn that poppy cultivation feeds insecurity in the province and throughout Afghanistan.

GOA MINISTERS - MORE ASSISTANCE THROUGH THE GOVERNMENT

¶10. (C) Walters met over dinner with a number of Afghan officials, including the Ministers of Interior, Agriculture, Counter-narcotics, and Education, the Chief of the National Directorate of Security, and a member of Parliament. The wide-ranging discussion included talks on the kinds of alternative crops that could profitably be grown around the country, the challenge of fighting corruption and creating a functioning judicial system, and the general pre-requisite for licit livelihoods of energy, irrigation, and roads.

¶11. (C) Two themes emerged. First, there should be much more active involvement by local government in decision-making on what kind of assistance is provided. Billions are being spent around the country, but the perception at the local level is that little is being done. Involving local government, whether through Provincial Development Councils, the Governors, or other mechanisms, will help address this problem. Second, Ministers unanimously called for more assistance to be channeled through the government, rather

than through international contractors. They argued that unless this happened, capacity in the Ministries would never be built. It would also lead the population to conclude that central government officials, rather than Taliban or other insurgents, could deliver now and in the future. While all acknowledged the challenges of maintaining accountability for vast sums, they argued that at least some measure of assistance should be disbursed in this way.

COMMENT

¶12. (C) Director Walters' meetings with GOA and international community officials highlighted the complexity of Afghanistan's poppy dilemma. Little consensus exists on how to solve the problem: the GOA wants time, more development assistance, and greater discretion on how to spend development funding; ISAF wants to see poppy elimination programs become more integrated with security strategy; the UK Embassy argues for incremental improvements within a broader capacity-building enterprise. These debates rage within a political environment where power is diffuse and Kabul competes for regional and local influence with provincial offices and tribal structures. Every decision requires inordinate time and effort as we work to broker agreements between competing interests.

¶13. (C) In the background, the poppy continues to grow, and Walters' aerial surveillance of rich poppy fields in Helmand offered immediate and powerful visual evidence of the scope of the problem. The difficulties of eradicating poppy in the same area where complex ISAF military operations are in full swing were also exposed. The long-term challenges are immense but should not overshadow the short-term necessity of political engagement, and Director Walters' visit highlighted the great importance of making poppy elimination one of the GOA's central priorities. No one ministry can win this battle alone. It requires concerted government will, and President Karzai needs to take control of this effort and publicize its importance for all of Afghanistan. Ambassador stressed this point during President Karzai's counter-narcotics meeting on March 27 (reftel). As of the first week in April, we are approaching the end game of this season's eradication efforts in Helmand and will soon be evaluating the campaign's impact in the light of Walters' observations during his recent visit. END COMMENT

¶14. (U) Director Walters' party cleared this cable.

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NEUMANN

Viewing cable 07KABUL2998, BOUCHER AND KARZAI, SPANTA ON JIRGAS, DRUGS, ECON

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
07KABUL2998	2007-09-08 14:02	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO1879

OO RUEHDBU RUEHPW

DE RUEHBUL #2998/01 2511423

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

O 081423Z SEP 07

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0072

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 06 KABUL 002998

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/FO DAS GASTRIGHT, SCA/A

STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG

NSC FOR AHARRIMAN

OSD FOR SHIVERS

CENTCOM FOR CG CFC-A. CG CJTF-82 POLAD

EO 12958 DECL: 07/10/2017

TAGS PGOV, PREL, PTER, ECON, IR, AF

SUBJECT: BOUCHER AND KARZAI, SPANTA ON JIRGAS, DRUGS, ECON

COOPERATION, GOVERNANCE, IRAN

Classified By: Charge Christopher Dell for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs Richard Boucher's August 27 meetings with President Karzai, Foreign Minister Spanta, Lower House Speaker Qanooni and National Security Advisor Rassoul spanned a range of key topics. Boucher, Karzai and Rassoul agreed to focus on themes of economic cooperation, intelligence-sharing, refugees, controlling illicit border traffic, and engaging the tribes during the upcoming trilateral meeting between Deputy Secretary of State Negroponte, Rassoul, and Pakistani National Security Advisor Aziz. Karzai's vision of a UN Special Envoy to Afghanistan largely mirrors U.S. thoughts on the issue. Discussion of counternarcotics and governance led Karzai to make a pitch for the international community to give the Afghan government room to do governance "the Afghan way." Boucher pressed Spanta and Qanooni to ensure that Iran's role in Afghanistan is limited to a constructive one. End Summary.

JIRGAS

¶2. (C) Karzai seemed pleased when Boucher shared that the recent Afghanistan-Pakistan jirga had been portrayed favorably in the U.S. media. Karzai commented that six months would be an ideal time frame after which to host the next jirga in Pakistan. Both agreed that the Afghan jirga was an important confidence-building measure, but Boucher expressed his hope that the next jirga in Pakistan might produce more concrete agreements. He raised the upcoming visit of Deputy Secretary of State Negroponte as an opportunity to capitalize on the momentum of the jirga and ensure continued progress towards the next one. Boucher raised the idea of having the Afghan and Pakistani National Security Advisors meet together with Negroponte during his visit to Jalalabad near the Afghan-Pakistani border and proposed that the three work together to identify specific issues where the greatest cooperation is needed (such as economic cooperation, intelligence-sharing and controlling illicit border traffic). Boucher also pushed for a discussion of how to engage the tribes along the border, whose buy-in is essential to the staying power of any future jirga agreements. Karzai, Spanta and Rassoul were each on board with this.

¶3. (C) Karzai shared that there was a recent gathering of Pakistani tribal chiefs in Peshawar during which the chiefs expressed a desire for the same rights and freedoms as ordinary Pakistani citizens. However, Karzai noted that these same tribes had recently refused to celebrate Pakistani Independence Day. Karzai said the Pakistani government needed to pull tribal leaders into a system of formal representation, while Boucher noted that Pakistani Interior Minister Sherpao did not think a political party system within the Tribal Areas would be feasible in the near term.

¶4. (C) In a separate discussion with Boucher, National Security Advisor Rassoul said Karzai had initiated the process of finalizing the list of

participants in the commission that will implement the agreements from the first jirga. Boucher seconded Sherpao's desire to see a commission comprised of those "who can get things done." In an encouraging sign, Rassoul acknowledged that Sherpao had been a very helpful partner in the lead-up to, execution of and follow-up to the first jirga. Rassoul stated that the first task would be to work on the continuation of dialogue with the "opposition," including Taliban. Boucher pushed specifically for the jirga commission to identify who the opposition is and relayed Sherpao's interest in bringing those "who are not part

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of the Taliban but sympathetic to them into the jirga process." Both agreed that Afghanistan's official reconciliation process (commonly referred to as "PTS") is not appropriate for high-level leaders and large groups, so the jirga commission could play a role in defining a more appropriate process for people in this category.

¶5. (C) Boucher shared his opinion that Pakistan is "making a real effort now by going after the hardest targets, including Pakistani and Arab insurgents," which has already yielded results. Rassoul noted that his government is considering using the Provincial Communications Center model (currently used to coordinate information among the Afghan National Security Forces at the provincial level) to set up a nexus for intelligence-sharing between the Afghan and Pakistani governments. Pakistan is concerned about Baluch rebels who are operating in and supported from Afghanistan, and Boucher stressed the importance of the Afghan government doing all it can to crack down on this.

¶6. (C) During the meeting with Spanta, the Foreign Minister indicated that while he had been skeptical about the jirga himself, he had considered it a major success in the end. He said that the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs was sending five newly appointed diplomats to Pakistan for training -- a significant goodwill gesture following the jirga, as Afghanistan has refused educational assistance from Pakistan in the past. Spanta said Musharraf's appearance at the end of the jirga was a real high point. Boucher emphasized that it was Karzai's urging that changed Musharraf's mind. Boucher clarified that Musharraf's initial decision not to attend was not a snub to the jirga itself but a cautionary move by Musharraf, who feared the Pakistani Supreme Court would rule to allow former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to return to Pakistan. Spanta conceded that, "We know Sharif is bad news. He is the author of Islamic radicalism in our region." Boucher agreed that Sharif could return to lead a movement that is pro-Islam, anti-Musharraf and anti- U.S.

UN SPECIAL ENVOY

¶7. (C) When Boucher asked Karzai his thoughts on the best role for a UN Special Envoy to Afghanistan, Karzai stated, "If it would be a UN Envoy

that would bring better coordination among the international community at capitals and also cause better coordination in Afghanistan, and within the Alliance on Afghanistan, then good. But if it is someone who would set up a parallel government of internationals, then no. At one point Karzai stated, "I do not want a stronger UN," then clarified that "I want the UN to be a stronger coordinator of the international community, yes, but not a parallel government in Afghanistan." (Note: The British have indicated their vision of a Special Envoy who would be based in and work primarily in Afghanistan, whereas the U.S. and Afghan sides envision an envoy who would spend a great deal of time fund-raising and coordinating donor strategies in donor country capitals. End note.)

¶8. (C) During his meeting with Rassoul, Boucher commented that the French government had been considering running a Provincial Reconstruction Team and that the French Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs plan to visit Afghanistan soon. Boucher, Rassoul, and the Ambassador discussed future prospects for other donor country involvement in Afghanistan, noting that the Canadians were "iffy" and that the Dutch may leave after 2009. The British, French, Australians and U.S. will likely stay

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for longer periods. Rassoul asserted the importance of "Afghanizing" the war in Kandahar both in order to reduce Canadian casualties, which might encourage the Canadians to stay longer, and to prepare the Afghan National Army and police for Canada's likely withdrawal. Boucher noted that after a withdrawal of maneuver troops, the Canadians may still be willing to run a Provincial Reconstruction Team focused on development, as well as the training and equipping of Afghan National Security Forces. Boucher noted that as 2009 is an election year, it would be good to encourage donor countries to stay throughout 2009- 2010. He also expressed hope that efforts to engage Pakistan now would increase security significantly in the next year or two, perhaps encouraging other countries to stay present in Afghanistan.

LOOKING AHEAD ON ERADICATION EFFORTS

¶9. (C) Boucher noted that the UN Office of Drugs and Crime had released its latest assessment of drug production in Afghanistan. He highlighted the report's findings that while the number of poppy-free provinces had increased from six to thirteen, overall production in Afghanistan had increased by 34 per cent, particularly in Helmand. Karzai reiterated his position against an aerial eradication campaign. When Boucher asked Karzai for his thinking on ground-based spray, Karzai replied, "We have not said no, but we're not saying yes either. We would have to inform the population and do it in a way that does not create enmity." The Ambassador noted the difficulties in relying on manual eradication and pointed out that 16 of the 135 eradicators had been killed last year. Boucher assured Karzai that the aerial spray decision was one for another year. "Another few years," Karzai interjected. Boucher planted the idea of eventually doing aerial spray

in Taliban controlled areas and manual eradication in those parts still loyal to the central government. Karzai gave no immediate reaction.

KARZAI ON DOING GOVERNANCE "THE AFGHAN WAY"

¶10. (C) The discussion on increased drug cultivation in Helmand sparked Karzai's thoughts on establishing and maintaining central government authority in the provinces. According to Karzai, "The question is why do we have Taliban controlling these areas now when two years ago I had control of Helmand? When Sher Mohammad was governor there, we had girls in schools and only 160 foreign troops. The international community pushed me to remove him and now look where we are." Referring to Sher Mohammad, Karzai retorted, "My question for you is, do you want a bad guy on your side or working for the Taliban? Where Afghans are in charge, drugs are less but where the international community is in charge, drugs are up." The Ambassador countered that the scenario is more accurately read as the international community has invested its resources and manpower in the tougher provinces where, not coincidentally, the Taliban have stepped up their counterinsurgency and drug cultivation efforts to discredit both the Afghan government and international community. Karzai conceded but added that the Afghan people do not see it that way from the ground.

¶11. (C) Pressing the issue more firmly, Boucher asked Karzai whether it is possible to have the Afghan government in control using good guys, rather than the likes of Sher Mohammad as its agents. "Yes, but that is a gradual process," said Karzai. Maintaining that

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"the most important thing is bringing the tribes to our side," he explained that the problem with the international community's approach to date is that "You are trying to pick and choose tribal chiefs (who will expand the presence of the central government into rural areas), but that is not how the tribal system works. A tribal chiefdom is jealously guarded. It cannot be taken by force and it cannot be imposed from the outside. When we distort tribal structures, the vacuum is filled by the Taliban, and that is exactly what has happened in Helmand and Uruzgan." He noted that Kandahar is an exception because of his outreach to all the tribal chiefs there. According to Karzai, "the people in Helmand and Uruzgan are uneducated, so you have to fight the Taliban with local ingredients," unlike in more developed Kandahar. He added, "We cannot bring tribal chiefs on board with governors because we say to them that we want you to support the governor, but we single out particular chiefs and say we don't want them involved in the process. Whether we like it or not, we have to work with these people." Karzai and Rassoul both indicated that Karzai is currently focused on an outreach campaign to win backing from tribal leaders in Helmand.

ROLE OF IRAN, LOCAL OPPOSITION MUST BE CONSTRUCTIVE

¶12. (C) Boucher informed Karzai that he would meet with Lower House Speaker Qanooni later that day. Boucher told Karzai that his message to Qanooni would be: "Political opposition is okay, but it has to be constructive." Karzai's advice was to remind Qanooni that he would not hold his position without U.S. backing. As the conversation turned to political parties, Karzai commented, "I will not be a political party man, but I will support parties," presumably referring to his rumored alliance with the newly formed Republican Party.

¶13. (C) During the meeting with Qanooni, Boucher emphasized that Iran and Russia should not be given inroads for influence in a way that would disrupt the system. Boucher clarified that while Iran's investment in cultural and educational institutions was acceptable, its role in smuggling weapons into Afghanistan was not. Qanooni responded by assuring Boucher and the Ambassador that Afghanistan continues to see the U.S. as its "long-term partner." Stressing that "We are not asking Afghans to choose sides," Boucher expressed U.S. understanding for Afghanistan's need to cultivate cooperative economic, business, cultural, and "normal" political relationships with Iran but reiterated that the line should be drawn at any activities that are disruptive to the establishment of a strong central government in Afghanistan. Qanooni indicated that, aside from Iran and Russia, people allied with the Hizb-i-Islami Gulbuddin party continue to seek more positions of influence within the Afghan government administration.

¶14. (C) Pointing out that, "The security problems in southern Afghanistan are spreading to the north," Qanooni added that, "While others think the security situation will remain in control, I and other members of Parliament have some concerns." He pointed to recent Taliban activity in Kapisa, Nuristan, and Baghlan as evidence of this. "Only Panjshir is protected," he stated. When Boucher asked how Taliban are able to operate in the north, where Pashtuns are a minority, Qanooni insisted that the Taliban have located and begun to infiltrate the predominantly Pashtun districts which are scattered around the north.

¶15. (C) Qanooni mentioned the formation of a special committee from the Lower House that will be

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investigating why decisions made by Parliament are not implemented by the executive branch. (Note: He was referring primarily to the decision of Parliament to impeach Foreign Minister Spanta and Minister of Refugees Akbar. Karzai mentioned that the Palace has also established a committee of six ministers to settle the issue with Parliament. End note.)

¶16. (C) The topic of Iran also surfaced during Boucher's meeting with Spanta, who acknowledged, "We agree with the U.S. and U.K. that Iran is engaged in a lot of interference, but our interest in dealing with Iran is to be careful not to open a second front along the Iranian border with Afghanistan." Spanta noted the Afghan government's recent decision to reject a Memorandum of Understanding on military cooperation proposed by Iran. Spanta also shared that Karzai had raised the issue of Iran's involvement in smuggling weapons into Afghanistan with Iranian President Ahmedinejad, who Spanta said, "denied it, of course, but the point was made." Spanta noted that Iran was primarily invested in supporting political parties, mobilizing Shia mullahs, influencing the Afghan media, and providing material support to the Taliban. He added that Iran is funding the completion of a railway that will go from Iran into Afghanistan and end outside Herat City. Spanta expressed his uncertainty about the complicity of the Iranian Foreign Minister in providing material support to the Taliban, stating that "He promised me he is not involved, but said that he is involved in supporting political parties in Afghanistan."

¶17. (C) Spanta commented that his biggest problem is that Iran continues to send back Afghan refugees - both those who are registered and those who are not - and added that Iran does not coordinate with the Afghan government on the forced returns.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

¶18. (C) Spanta explained that Afghanistan continues to work with Pakistan on transit trade and updating their formal treaty from the 1960's. They would also like to address this in the framework of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. Afghan Commerce Minister Farhang will travel to Pakistan shortly in hopes of making some progress. Spanta moved next to a request for U.S. financial assistance for the upcoming conference of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), October 16-20, 2007 in Herat, which is focused on regional economic cooperation between Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Iran, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Pakistan. Boucher promised to pass on the request but cautioned Spanta that the prospects were not good given how soon the conference would take place and the lack of U.S. membership in the organization.

¶19. (C) Boucher stressed to Karzai and Spanta the need to follow-up on the success of the Tajik- Afghanistan bridge opening with a trucking and transit agreement that allows Afghan and Tajik vendors and distributors to transport their goods across the border. The Ambassador pitched the idea of a truck leasing consortium project that would allow small- scale distributors, who could not afford to own trucks, to rent them when transporting their products. Both Karzai and Spanta welcomed the idea. Spanta noted that Afghan Commerce Minister Farhang will soon travel to Pakistan to discuss similar issues.

¶20. (C) Spanta also noted that the Chinese are increasingly interested in becoming a regional economic partner as well as knowing more about what the larger international community is doing to invest in Afghanistan.

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¶21. (C) Note: Renewed focus on regional economic cooperation will be part of the agenda for the upcoming Afghanistan Ministerial Meeting on September 23 (co-chaired by President Karzai and Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon) that will precede the UN General Assembly. The October 3 meeting of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board will also focus on regional economic cooperation. This will be an important follow-up to the success of the Tajik-Afghanistan bridge opening and an opportunity to capitalize on the momentum of the jirga, with economic cooperation presenting a clear win-win for all parties involved. End note.

¶22. (SBU) The Office of the Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs has cleared this cable. DELL

Viewing cable 07KABUL3800, USDP EDELMAN NOV 7 MEETING WITH PRESIDENT KARZAI:

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
07KABUL3800	2007-11-10 06:06	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO3668
PP RUEHDBU RUEHPW
DE RUEHBUL #3800/01 3140600
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 100600Z NOV 07
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1397
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC

RHMFSS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL

RUMICEA/JICCENT MACDILL AFB FL

RHMFSS/COMSOCCENT MACDILL AFB FL

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 4275

RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 3699

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 KABUL 003800

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/FO DAS GASTRIGHT, SCA/A, S/CRS, S/CT,

EUR/RPM, INL/CIVPOL

STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG

NSC FOR JWOOD

OSD FOR USDP EDELMAN AND DASD SHIVERS

CENTCOM FOR CSTC-A, CG CJTF-82, POLAD

EO 12958 DECL: 11/08/2017

TAGS PREL, MARR, SNAR, PGOV, AF

SUBJECT: USDP EDELMAN NOV 7 MEETING WITH PRESIDENT KARZAI:

IRAN, COUNTERNARCOTICS, MUSA QALA AND PAKISTAN

Classified By: Ambassador William Wood for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: In his November 7 office call on President Karzai, USDP Edelman expressed condolences for the victims of the November 6 bombing in Baghlan Province and highlighted the opportunity presented by this heinous act to reinforce Afghan national unity and action against the Taliban. Karzai welcomed FBI assistance in investigating the Baghlan bombing. Edelman urged that the IROA act in concert with the U.S. to end Iranian lethal support to the Taliban before it reaches the same levels as in Iraq. Karzai agreed that Iran has to be confronted, adding without elaboration that we need to do so effectively. In response to Edelman noting intense Congressional interest in the counternarcotics situation, Karzai said Helmand Province (which produces 50 percent of Afghanistan's opium) must be liberated before

poppy production can be addressed, and he added that the people there are tired of Taliban control and want to be liberated. He did not dismiss the need for ISAF to use air power "at the risk of politically difficult civilian casualties" to get the job done. On Pakistan, Karzai expressed the hope that Musharraf's extra-constitutional approach will work, but it was not clear to Karzai that Musharraf is ready to follow through in the short term on elections and a deal with Benizir Bhutto. Karzai welcomed the prospect of a visit by SecDef Gates before the end of the year. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) USDP Edelman, accompanied by Ambassador Wood, called on President Karzai on November 7. Karzai was accompanied by Defense Minister Wardak, National Security Advisor Rassoul, and two staff. Edelman and Wood were accompanied by DASD Shivers, Deputy Commander of the Combined Security Transition Command - Afghanistan (CSTC-A) BG George, two OSD staffers and an Embassy notetaker.

Baghlan Bombing: FBI Assistance Welcomed

¶3. (C) Edelman opened by expressing his deepest condolences for the victims of the November 6 bomb attack in Baghlan Province that killed six parliamentarians and up to 40 other victims, including as many as 15 children. (NOTE: An authoritative assessment of casualties was not available at the time of the meeting.) Clearly shaken by the tragedy, Karzai described it as a terrible and sad event and noted that the basic facts of the attack were still under investigation. He recalled briefly the names and his personal association with most of the six murdered parliamentarians and expressed concern for the security of a parliamentarian still hospitalized. In response to Edelman's question, Karzai affirmed his conviction that if initial reports that this was a suicide attack are confirmed, it was definitely the work of the Taliban, which had carried out many other such attacks, e.g., in Kandahar.

¶4. (C) Later in the conversation, Karzai said he wanted the U.S. to help out with the investigation, and he welcomed Ambassador Wood's offer to request FBI assistance with the investigation of the bombing. Karzai offered to include U.S. personnel in the IROA delegation being dispatched to investigate the attack site, led by Interior Minister Zarar and including Parliamentary security representatives and the National Directorate for Security (NDS).

An Opportunity for National Unity and Decisive Action

¶5. (C) Edelman observed that the Baghlan bombing also presented an opportunity to stress national unity and rejection of terrorism. Wood added that this is an opportunity to bring the Afghan people together not only to

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mourn the victims but also to affirm a confident outlook for the future. In spite of Karzai's difficult relations with Parliamentary Speaker and political rival Qanooni, Wood pointed out that Qanooni is making unifying statements, e.g., supportive of IROA security measures for the Parliamentary delegation visiting Baghlan; he is not using the occasion to seek to divide the nation for personal political gain. Karzai and Qanooni should join in bringing the nation together and use this as a basis for renewed, decisive action to counter the insurgency and take the hard decisions needed to advance good governance goals.

Iran

¶6. (C) In this regard, Edelman noted the military situation in Farah Province and asked Karzai whether there might be an Iranian hand behind recent Taliban attacks. Edelman recalled maps of the myriad smuggling routes from Iran into Afghanistan and reports of Taliban recruits training at sites in Iran, although there was no concrete evidence of direct Iranian involvement. He added that ISAF Commander GEN McNeill will want to respond, and he will be seeking to work with Karzai on an effective military strategy.

¶7. (C) Karzai agreed that Iran is "busy." It is seeking to undermine the U.S. in Afghanistan, and it is trying to undermine development and reconstruction in western Afghanistan. Karzai asserted that Iran is bothered that Afghanistan is becoming an important transit hub for the region, and it wants to forestall Pakistani and Indian natural gas imports from Central Asia in order to protect its own market.

¶8. (C) Edelman asked how best to deal with Iran. The explosively-formed projectile weapons (EFPs) intercepted by British troops are worrying; even small numbers, if effectively employed against a small Ally such as the Dutch, could have a strategic effect. EFPs have been a major cause of U.S. casualties in Iraq. Reports of MANPADS coming out of Iran are also of concern. Recalling his conversation with Karzai in March on Iran, Edelman said Iranian meddling is getting increasingly lethal. He appreciated this was a complicated issue and that Afghanistan wants to avoid a two-front war, but Iranian actions, if not checked, will result in a two-front war in any event. We need to work together to put the Iranians back on their heels, adding that the USG is implementing new financial sanctions on the IRCG Quds Force. Iranian lethal assistance to the Taliban must be stopped before it reaches the levels of similar assistance to insurgents in Iraq; Edelman underscored that we need to make clear that Iranian support for the Taliban is equally dangerous to Tehran and Afghanistan.

¶9. (C) Karzai agreed that Iran has to be confronted, adding without elaboration that we need to do so "effectively." They are supporting those who are killing Afghan and U.S. personnel, so we cannot keep quiet, he

said. Edelman agreed that pressure is what the Iranians understand. The British and French are with us; we need to bring the Germans along. Without going into detail, Karzai said he discussed Iran with Chancellor Merkel when she visited Afghanistan last week.

Governance and Counternarcotics

¶10. (C) Edelman said the perception in Washington is that Afghan and ISAF forces have had tactical successes in disrupting the Taliban, and Congress has appropriated significant new funding to sustain the train-and-equip programs for the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police. He noted that Congressional committees plan to hold hearings in the near future on Afghanistan and will be asking

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what the IROA and USG are doing to take advantage of the tactical successes to advance police training and reform, extend governance to the provincial and local levels, create economic opportunity and counter the narcotics trade. Interest in counternarcotics action will become particularly acute in the wake of the UN report on record poppy crops during the last growing season.

Musa Qala and Airpower

¶11. (C) Karzai responded by highlighting public frustration in parts of Helmand Province with Taliban control. He recounted a recent phone call he received from a tribal chief in Helmand urging that Afghan and ISAF forces launch an attack on the Musa Qala District center. Karzai said there are 300 shops that sell opium paste and 65 heroin labs in Musa Qala. He added that the people are sick and tired of the situation and want to be liberated. Karzai said that Helmand must be liberated in order to stop poppy production. In response to Edleman,s observations about recent polling results showing significant public opinion against poppy cultivation and trafficking, Karzai said the Afghan people want a better, honest government, and they support the international community,s presence in Afghanistan. The point, he added, is to use this opportunity properly. The more we can bring security to the people and force the Taliban out, the better.

¶12. (C) Wood noted that GEN McNeill is developing a plan for Musa Qala, but it will likely require air power, which in the past has created political issues due to unintended civilian casualties. Karzai agreed that the plan would have to be discussed, but he reiterated that the people in Musa Qala are fed up, and we need to act.

Pakistan

¶13. (C) Karzai emphasized that the issue of Taliban sanctuary in Pakistan has to be solved, noting with dismay that the Taliban flag has been raised in three districts in the FATA. He observed that while Afghanistan has a national identity and a weak state, Pakistan has a strong state with no coherent national identity. Noting that he had discussed Pakistan in his November 7 telephone call with President Bush, Karzai expressed the hope that Musharraf's imposition of extra-constitutional rule will work; Musharraf must be sincere because he has no further room for "more games."

¶14. (C) Edelman noted that U.S.-Pakistan Defense Consultative Group (DCG) talks were postponed to underscore U.S. dissatisfaction with the imposition of the Provisional Constitution Order; it was also not clear that our Pakistani interlocutors would be able to focus on the DCG agenda, given the current political turmoil. The USG and Afghanistan share an interest in Pakistani authorities moving against terrorist sanctuaries and the Taliban, Quetta Shura; arresting lawyers will not help in this regard. We are urging Musharraf to focus on keeping to the election schedule, completing the deal with Bhutto, and taking off his uniform. Although there are special interests that are seeking to extend the period for martial law, it must be kept short. If not, Musharraf's interests and those of the Pakistani Army may begin to diverge. Karzai agreed the situation is complicated. Musharraf recognizes that if/when Bhutto takes power, he will be out, and he may not be ready yet to take that step.

Possible Gates Visit

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¶15. (C) Edelman conveyed the warm regards of SecDef Gates and said the SecDef hopes to visit Afghanistan before the end of the year. Karzai welcomed the prospect of his visit. WOOD

Viewing cable 08KABUL1275, PRT LASHKAR GAH, HELMAND PROVINCE: GOVERNOR MANGAL TAKES

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
08KABUL1275	2008-05-26 05:05	2010-12-02 21:09	UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO3016

RR RUEHBW RUEHIK RUEHPOD RUEHPW RUEHYG
DE RUEHBUL #1275 1470548
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 260548Z MAY 08
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4100
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RHMFIUU/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
UNCLAS KABUL 001275

DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, S/CRS, EUR/RPM
NSC FOR WOOD
OSD FOR SHIVERS
CENTCOM FOR CG CSTC-A, CG CJTF-101 POLAD

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

EO 12958 N/A

TAGS PREL, PGOV, AF

SUBJECT: PRT LASHKAR GAH, HELMAND PROVINCE: GOVERNOR MANGAL TAKES
CHARGE

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY. Governor Mangal's first two months in Helmand have been productive, building solid support for his administration. His public outreach efforts are excellent, and he continues to meet regularly with residents of Lashkar Gah and the tribal and civil leadership of Helmand. Mangal has an impressive understanding of government operations and is pushing his provincial ministry directors to improve their planning and implementation capacity and to take charge of reconstruction and development efforts. He has an effective working relationship with the British-led

Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), and Afghan security forces have responded well to his leadership. During a May 24 dinner, which included senior Afghan government officials, visiting British Secretary of State for Defense Des Browne registered HMG's strong support for the Helmand governor. Mangal's experience and determination to improve Helmand's provincial government sends a strong signal to area residents that the Afghan government can be effective.

¶2. (SBU) Upon his arrival in Helmand, Governor Mangal immediately focused on improving the performance of the provincial government. He has pushed provincial ministry directors to improve their operations and is personally reviewing the capacity of each director. Mangal chaired his first Helmand Provincial Development Committee on May 20 and was not pleased with the directors' reports. He told the directors to coordinate all government, NGO and international development activities within their areas of responsibility. The fight against corruption is a primary goal of his administration; he called for their support in eliminating it. Mangal told PRT officers that some local officials enjoy political or family connections and their removal from office will be difficult; however, with sufficient proof of non-performance, changes can be made in Helmand's provincial government.

¶3. (SBU) Public outreach is a key part of Mangal's efforts to bring the government closer to the people. He makes a point of traveling around Lashkar Gah and makes regular visits to the city bazaars to speak with the merchants and shoppers. In conjunction with the Ministry of Information and Culture, he organized a Public Poetry Festival in Lashkar Gah on May 15. The event took place at the women's park with several thousand people in attendance. Mangal delivered the opening address and called upon the audience to help promote a better image of Helmand, and to work with him to attract business, visitors and investments to the province. Residents were pleased by this effort and Mangal's support among the populace is growing.

¶4. (SBU) Mangal has established an effective relationship with the PRT, which has provided him with expanded internet service, computers and office furniture to improve his office's capacity. Mangal told the PRT additional investment in government infrastructure is required in Lashkar Gah and the District Centers to reestablish the government across Helmand. His relationship with the security leadership is good, and he participates in weekly security briefings from Afghan and UK security forces. He occasionally maintains longer office hours to meet additional guests and build better ties across the province.

¶5. (SBU) Mangal's first two months in Helmand have been impressive. The provincial government is coming to life and he is pushing ministry directors to produce results. Residents of Lashkar Gah readily express support for Mangal and his efforts and have high hopes he can continue to improve the functions of Helmand's government.

WOOD

Viewing cable 08KABUL1975, EX-TALIBAN SEEK MEDIATION ROLE

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
08KABUL1975	2008-07-31 06:06	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

O 310653Z JUL 08
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4937
INFO AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
OSD WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
COMSOCCENT MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 001975

STATE FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, S/CRS, SA/PB, S/CT
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG
NSC PASS FOR WOOD
OSD FOR SHIVERS
CENTCOM FOR CJTF-101, POLAD, JICCENT

EO 12958 DECL: 07/30/2018
TAGS PGOV, PREL, PTER, PINR, AF
SUBJECT: EX-TALIBAN SEEK MEDIATION ROLE

Classified By: Acting Political Counselor Jeremiah Howard, for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

SUMMARY

¶1. (C) On July 29, President Karzai gave the Ambassador a plan for negotiations with the Taliban that he had received from Taliban reconcilees (SEPTTEL). In a meeting arranged by the presidency at our request the next day, prominent ex-Taliban said they are well-placed to mediate reconciliation with the insurgency, but argued they are hampered from doing so by their inclusion on U.N. List 1267. In earlier discussions, former Taliban government officials told us they reject Mullah Omar's fanaticism, rigidity and alliance with Al Qaeda, but that they fear the Taliban are in the ascendant and becoming more extreme. They stressed they accept the current constitution in general, but do want amendments to make clear the primacy of Islam.

Presidency Wants to Exploit Ex-Taliban as Mediators

¶2. (C) On July 30, Deputy National Security Advisor Engineer Ibrahim Spinzada, who is seeking U.S. support in convincing Russia to allow removal of names from United Nations List 1267, responded to our earlier request to arrange a meeting for Political Officers with reconcilees from the former Taliban government. He convoked to the meeting ex-Foreign Minister Maulavi Ahmad Mutawakkil, the Taliban nominee for ambassador to the United Nations Abdul Hakim Mujadid (Note: The Taliban regime was never accepted as sovereign by a preponderance of the world community), ex-Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Habibullah Fawzi, and ex-Deputy Education Minister and current Afghan Senator Arsula Rahmani.

¶3. (C) The four ex-Taliban mentioned the plan for negotiations that had been given to President Karzai, and, without referring directly to its text, emphasized several key points: -- Force alone cannot defeat the Taliban in either Afghanistan or Pakistan, but since the roots of Taliban insurgency lie in Afghanistan, resolution of conflict here would undermine Taliban rebellion in the FATA and NWFP; -- If the Taliban are reconciled, allied opposition groups, including those led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar or the Haqqanis, would disappear; -- Ex-Taliban are an unused resource for President Karzai and the international community, since they alone have access to both political leaders and command levels of the insurgency, and are willing to mediate in negotiations; -- There should be no preconditions for negotiations, which could take place in the Gulf or Saudi Arabia, or in Afghanistan in the presence of international forces; -- Negotiations should be an incremental process, avoiding initially issues such as ceasefire or the prison at Guantanamo, and stressing instead the cessation of Taliban attacks on NGOs, schools or roads, government commitment to minimize civilian casualties and good-will detainee releases; -- Reconcilees represent a silent majority in the Taliban who simply want to end the war, and had publicly accepted the constitution though they would favor amendments to enhance the constitutional role of Islam; -- Negotiations, reconciliation and restoration of security can and should be followed by elections, and some ex-Taliban would like to be

candidates. -- Only when key moderates are removed from the 1267 List will they have the credibility needed to convince insurgents they can guarantee agreements they broker with Karzai or the international community.

Ex-Taliban Moderates as an Inchoate Movement

¶4. (SBU) In the weeks leading up to our July 30 meeting, we established contact with numerous senior ex-Taliban. We provide the paragraphs below to give a sense of what they are thinking about how to end the insurgency and how best to achieve democratic -- but Islamic -- governance.

¶5. (SBU) Former Foreign Ministry aide Waheed Mujda has written a book on the Taliban (Ahmed Rashid wrote from the outside, but I wrote from inside). In the summer of 2001, he says he went to the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad to warn that Al Qaeda planned to use "massive explosives" to attack the U.S.

¶6. (SBU) Mujda reports that immediately after 9/11, the Taliban began to fracture over the wisdom and morality of attacking civilians, over lost economic opportunities if the Taliban isolated itself from the West, and over dangers to be faced if the U.S. occupied Afghanistan. There was also concern about growing reliance on Pakistan's ISI and deepening ties to Al Qaeda. Mujda hoped at the time that the U.S. would wait to attack the Taliban, since he predicted there would be "within the year" a definitive split between urban intellectuals led by Foreign Minister Mutawakkil, and Mullah Omar's village-based obscurantists. After the U.S. "installed" Karzai, though, he saw moderates' chances evaporating, while many lower-ranking Taliban with little commitment to either Mutawakkil or Mullah Omar proved opportunistic, waiting simply to see if the international community and Karzai could govern.

¶7. (SBU) Mujda lamented that Karzai named governors who harassed ex-Taliban of all ranks rather than open a dialog. Meanwhile, Mujda alleged, international forces committed atrocities, such as breaking down doors and searching women, that "even the Soviets taught soldiers to avoid." Afraid of "death or Guantanamo," some moderates concluded they had no alternative but to return to Mullah Omar. With the war ongoing, he contends, the Taliban as expanded its original commitments to "sharia, security and territorial integrity," to encompass an international dimension including demands that the U.S. leave Saudi Arabia.

Civilian Casualties and "Hunger Suicides"

¶8. (C) The Taliban's Attorney General, Maulavi Jalal-u-Din Shinwari, agrees the Taliban is growing even more militant. Taliban ideologues have no serious doctrinal competition, he complained: the Karzai-allied Ulema Council is slow and inactive, meeting "only once a year, and that" in the presidential palace. "Since moderates have limited effective intellectual or spiritual leadership, the Taliban and hardline mullahs in Pakistan have commandeered the right to define jihad, and channeled the jihadi impulse into "radical and violent forms."

¶9. (C) Shinwari lambasted international forces for repeated civilian casualty incidents, which make the Taliban's recruiting and ideological tasks easier. These "indiscriminate attacks" enable the Taliban to argue the U.S. does not care about Afghans or Islam, and that Karzai is in complicity with the U.S. or incapable of curbing U.S. excesses. As if this intense anger were not enough, he sputtered, there is also the despair of deepening poverty and inequality, creating for the first time "hunger suicides," who kill and die either to collect a Taliban payment or simply to lighten the economic burden on their families by removing one more mouth to feed.

Not a Loose Cannon

¶10. (SBU) Parliamentary Deputy Mullah Abdul Salaam Rocketi, whose name derives from his deft touch with a rocket-propelled grenade launcher, warns that the U.S. has not carefully identified its enemies. If the U.S. continues to "fight everyone," including Al Qaeda, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and both Taliban radicals and moderates, then he warns we cannot win, and that Pakistan, Iran or Russia will dominate Afghanistan.

¶11. (C) Rocketi counsels that "Karzai is lost," a feckless ally for the U.S. whose cabinet, he argues, is driven by members' separate and competing interests, unconcerned by the public's needs. On the infrequent occasions when Karzai works up the courage or is forced to "fire the thieves," Rocketi mutters, "he just replaces them with new thieves." Karzai's failure, he concludes, is "expanding the Taliban's once narrow doors of entry into wide gates." The U.S. must identify who within the Taliban is moderate or amenable to dialog, and work with them to seek peace and agree on how Afghanistan is to be governed.

Alternatives to Mullah Omar

¶12. (SBU) Two figures generally recognized as heading the ex-Taliban moderates are ex-Foreign Minister Mutawakkil, and ex-Ambassador to Pakistan Abdul Salim Zaef, who spent four years at Guantanamo and whom some see as the stronger of the two. We talked to them separately in late July.

¶13. (C) Mutawakil said the U.S. must realize there are two kinds of reconciliation. One, which he calls the U.S. strategy, is designed to entice insurgents into supporting Karzai. The other, he distinguished, is designed to end the war and achieve an understanding between the two warring Afghan sides. The war is being driven by foreign allies, he explained, but the U.S. on one side and Al Qaeda on the other have their own priorities. Mutawakil said he had advised Karzai to carry out negotiations with the insurgency, but to aim for incremental progress, concentrating first on small resolvable issues. Further, he had told Karzai, any negotiations must be conducted in private, with no interfering media coverage. The mediators, he half-joked, can be only "those whom neither the government nor Taliban want to be killed," and who maintain impartial contact with both warring sides. To make mediation possible, Zaef and Mutawakkil agree, U.N. 1267 restrictions must be lifted.

¶14. (C) Mutawakkil and Zaef believe firmly that the international community is distancing itself irreparably from ordinary Afghans. Mutawakkil argues that, as the U.S.-led coalition intensifies military operations, it drives the Taliban to seek self-preservation by attaching itself more closely to Al Qaeda and the Pakistani ISI. Zaef warns that the U.S. lacks cultural knowledge and sensitivity necessary to run Afghanistan through Karzai, and that given the difficulty of running legitimate and credible elections, it should allow the transfer of governing authority to a Loya Jirga. He warns that to be effective and bring peace, the members of this Jirga cannot be named by Karzai or seen to be puppets of the U.S., and that they should be named by a pre-Jirga representing tribal and religious leaders from the entire country. He says there should also be a jirga commission to discuss "flaws" in the current constitution.

¶15. (C) Mutawakkil elaborated on what the Afghan constitution should be like. Democracy, he stipulated, is a means to a better and peaceful life, and is not a means in itself. An Islamic base can be built for a better life, and the Taliban's biggest mistake was in not understanding the need to avoid meddling in private lives. The Department for Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice did not understand proportionality: it used major force and applied severe punishments for even minor violations, and in so doing lost public confidence.

¶16. (C) The constitution, Mutawakkil continued, is as it stands now "a piece of paper," which even Karzai's nominal allies and opponents in Parliament fail to respect. He thinks the constitution should be amended to garner wider respect. The primary article to be amended is the commitment to freedom of religion, since Islam must be acknowledged as paramount. This would not affect the country's Hindus and Sikhs ("there are no Afghan Christians and only one Jew"), who would continue to be allowed freedom of religion. No Muslim, though, Mutawakkil continued, could be allowed to abandon Islam without punishment in the form of prison or banishment.

WOOD

Viewing cable 08KABUL2782, QAYUM KARZAI AND AMBASSADOR DISCUSS SAUDI

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
08KABUL2782	2008-10-18 10:10	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

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DE RUEHBUL #2782/01 2921006

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

O 181006Z OCT 08

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5863

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHMFSS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KABUL 002782

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, S/CRS

STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG

NSC FOR JWOOD

OSD FOR MCGRAW

CG CJTF-101, POLAD, JICCENT

EO 12958 DECL: 10/17/2018

TAGS PTER, PREL, AF

SUBJECT: QAYUM KARZAI AND AMBASSADOR DISCUSS SAUDI
RECONCILIATION TALKS

REF: A. KABUL 2746 B. RIYADH 1510

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. On October 13, Abdul Qayum Karzai described to the Ambassador the potential Saudi reconciliation process. He and Abdullah Anas developed the current initiative a year ago and secured Taliban engagement through Anas's connection to Mullah Abdul Salam Zaif (former Taliban Ambassador to Pakistan). He led a recent Afghan delegation of 17, including former Taliban officials, to Saudi Arabia for an informal meeting of mullahs and an iftar dinner with the King. Qayum expressed concern about the fragility of the process and its vulnerability to being "usurped" by the government. Saudi Arabia agreed to continue facilitating talks, but was firm it would not serve as an intermediary for the Taliban - they must work directly with Afghanistan. Qayum said the King is concerned about being too closely linked to the Taliban and that media speculation regarding the recent Saudi-hosted event made some officials there nervous. Qayum assured the Ambassador the U.S. would be consulted at every step and asked that the U.S. urge the Saudis to remain engaged. (Qayum is President Karzai's brother and an American citizen.)

¶2. (C) For the past two and a half years, Qayum said he had been seeking a "bottom-up" process for engagement with reconciliable Taliban outside a governmental framework. Although many senior Taliban were interested in ending hostilities, individual reconciliation was not an option for them politically. In October 2007, Qayum met with Abdullah Anas (former Algerian mujahideen commander now living in London) to discuss Anas's proposal of engaging Muslim clerics and scholars to create a framework for talks with the Taliban. Qayum suggested Saudi Arabia or Dubai. Anas agreed and began to consul prominent Muslim scholars, rallying them around their shared concern that Taliban violence gave Islam "a bad name" throughout the world.

SEEKING SAUDI INVOLVEMENT

¶3. (C) Anas and Qayum met with Dr. Mansour, advisor to King Abdullah, to ask Saudi Arabia to host the first engagement in this process: gathering a "group of mullahs." Mansour reacted positively to Saudi Arabia serving this role, in part because as it would dilute Saudi Arabia's identification with Pakistan - and extremism. According to Qayum, Mansour stated "the international community sees us as a front." Qayum noted that the Saudis see a directly link between Afghanistan's security and their own stability concerns.

TALIBAN MULLAH ZAIF AGREES TO PARTICIPATE

¶4. (C) In April 2008, Qayum hosted Dr. Mansour, Anas and Mullah Abdul Salam Zaif, former Taliban ambassador to Pakistan and informal line to Mullah Omar, at his home in Kandahar. Qayum said that when his guests arrived the television was showing footage of a Taliban bombing attack on a mosque earlier that day. The men were visibly upset by the carnage, including Zaif. The shared reaction to the bombing set the tone for constructive talks and Zaif agreed to participate. Qayum shared his view that Zaif is trying to carve a political space within the Taliban for reconciliation.

QAYUM PREPARES THE GROUND AND THE SAUDIS ENGAGE - CAUTIOUSLY

¶5. (C) As a result of Qayum's, and then President Karzai's, meetings with Dr. Mansour, King Abdullah called Karzai directly to discuss the proposed process. (The King's role energized Karzai's interest in the process for the first time.) Over the next few months Qayum hosted a number of Taliban representatives in Kandahar to continue preparations.

¶6. (C) Through the spring and summer representatives from both Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan shuttled back and forth. Qayum and former Kandahar Governor Asadullah Khalid worked

KABUL 00002782 002 OF 003

closely together, traveling to Saudi to meet with Mansour and Prince Miqrin, head of Saudi intelligence. Mansour made more visits to Kabul and Anas continued to serve as go-between with Zaif and Taliban. In August, Saudi Arabia agreed to host an initial contact meeting during Ramadan -- stressing the importance of maintaining a low profile. While indicating the King Abdullah's desire to assist, Miqrin made it clear the King was approaching the process cautiously and did not want to be linked too closely to the Taliban. Miqrin said Saudi Arabia didn't want to be alone in this, highlighting the importance of keeping the U.S. and U.K. informed. Miqrin also stressed the Taliban leadership should not see Saudi Arabia's willingness to support the talks as an indication the country would serve as an intermediary; the Taliban must pursue the reconciliation process directly with Afghanistan.

THE SEPTEMBER MEETING

¶7. (C) In organizing the trip, Qayum, Mansour and Zaif agreed the focus would be on religious activities and peaceful exchanges, in keeping with the Ramadan season. Both sides agreed a large group would not be advisable so there were 17 in the Afghan delegation, and only a subset would attend all meetings. In addition to Zaif, Maulavi Ahmad Mutawakkil (Taliban ex-Foreign Minister), Maulvi Abdul Hadi Shinwari (former chief justice) and current Afghan senator Arsala Rahmani agreed to attend. Qayum denied reports that Hekmatyar sent a representative; he said Hekmatyar's nephew was in Saudi Arabia at the same time, but did not participate in the talks.

¶8. (C) Qayum said the Saudis orchestrated the encounter carefully. When the Taliban group arrived, Qayum went to his room while Mansour remained with the group to welcome them. Mansour, like Miqrin, made opening points to the Taliban: Saudi Arabia condemned the killing of innocents in Afghanistan and viewed the Afghan constitution with the same respect as its own; both share a common basis in the Koran. The Saudis further clarified they would not support any Taliban proposals that infringed on the authority of the central Afghan government - such as the establishment of autonomous regions.

¶9. (C) Qayum said Prince Miqrin called him just before dawn to brief him on the dinner and meeting. Miqrin said a large group had come from Medina to meet the Afghan delegation and there had been an enthusiastic response from the Quetta participants. Qayum said everyone reacted nervously when details of the process first leaked to the media - especially the Taliban participants and the Saudis. Miqrin suggested an alternative location might be needed for talks - perhaps Dubai.

QAYUM DETERMINED TO KEEP PROCESS DISCIPLINED AND OUT OF GOVT HANDS

¶10. (C) The Ambassador praised Qayum's leadership on this important issue. He stressed that such talks require discipline and patience. Afghanistan must deal from a position of strength. Qayum agreed, saying that if the military pressure on the Taliban eased the process would fail. He confided what he had told Dr. Mansour - that the engagement must be kept simple and focused at the beginning - with the same facilitators guiding it until it matured. It would collapse if too many people - or governments - became involved. Qayum repeatedly expressed concern that the government might "usurp" the process: "An Afghan government-based negotiation would lead to everyone at the table demanding a slice (of the government), but the government would be unable to satisfy all of these competing demands and would take the blame for the negotiations' failure."

¶11. (C) The Ambassador asked that the U.S. be advised if Afghanistan engaged any Taliban with ties to Al Qaeda and/or global terrorism in the reconciliation process - figures like Mullah Omar and Mullah Barader. The U.S. did not oppose this

KABUL 00002782 003 OF 003

process, stressed the Ambassador, but would not be a participant either. Qayum accepted this and commented that he saw no way for Mullah Omar to survive the process - he didn't have the intelligence or popular support to emerge on top. He and Barader were hated by too many elements within the Pashtun spectrum. Perhaps exile was an option for them. In closing, Qayum assured the Ambassador that the U.S. would be kept informed of all developments.

COMMENT

¶12. (C) Qayum has President Karzai's confidence, but is a neophyte in such a process. The encounter in Saudi Arabia was with Afghan and Taliban proxies, rather than decision-makers. It is especially unclear what connection Zaif and the other so-called Taliban representatives have with the Taliban leadership, although there are reports that Zaif met with two representatives from the Quetta Shura who had shadowed the delegation to follow developments and report back. President Karzai is interested in this process at least as much because it represents a step forward in support from King Abdullah as because it holds some prospect for neutralizing some or all of the Taliban. That said, this encounter could bring Saudi Arabia closer to Afghanistan and could have some benefits with the Taliban, especially if other pressures on the Taliban continue to grow. We intend to be supportive, but without unrealistic expectations, and certainly with no direct U.S. involvement.

WOOD

Viewing cable 08KABUL3030, POLITICAL AND SECURITY SITUATION IN HELMAND:

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
08KABUL3030	2008-11-22 10:10	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO7225

OO RUEHPW

DE RUEHBUL #3030/01 3271009

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

O 221009Z NOV 08

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6192

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 003030

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A

NSC FOR WOOD

OSD FOR MCGRAW

CENTCOM FOR CG CJTF-101 POLAD

EO 12958 DECL: 11/21/2018

TAGS PREL, PGOV, EAID, AF

SUBJECT: POLITICAL AND SECURITY SITUATION IN HELMAND:

SPANTA AND SPENZADA VIEWS

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary

¶1. (C) President Karzai is willing to consider a combined ISAF-ANA (with key roles for the U.S. and UK) security plan to improve stability in Helmand, but is convinced reinstating Sher Mohammad Akhunzada (SMA) as governor is the best way to achieve stability (and bring out votes in next year,s election). There is no known decision or timeline for replacing Governor Mangal with SMA. Spenzada welcomed international collaboration with Mangal to increase aid projects in Alizai areas to bolster Mangal,s tenuous position.

¶2. (SBU) The subject of Helmand security, Sher Mohammad Akhunzada and the role of PRTs came up in two recent meetings: an 11/18 meeting between FM Spanta and the Ambassador and an 11/17 meeting between Deputy NSA Ibrahim Spenzada and Polcouns.

London visit: Karzai challenges UK for a Helmand security plan

¶3. (C) FM Spanta confirmed that Helmand security was the top issue of Karzai,s London discussions. The exchange centered on the best means to bring Taliban-controlled areas under government control (according to the NDS, five of Helmand,s 13 districts are undr Taliban control). The UK and Afghanistan discussed a combined ISAF-ANA approach (with implicit understanding of lead roles for the U.S. and UK) and an Afghan-led solution.

¶4. (C) Deputy NSA Spenzada put it in starker terms -- Karzai told the British that he wanted to see their Helmand security plan. If the UK didn,t have one, he would take a &tribal solution.8 Spenzada confirmed &tribal solution8 meant reinstating Sher Mohammad Akhunzada (SMA) as Helmand governor.

¶5. (C) UK General Richards told Spanta the UK was prepared to offer to send 2000 additional soldiers to Helmand once Karzai requested it officially. Spanta said the London visit helped reduce misunderstandings, but he expressed disappointment in the British, contending they were not ready to fight as actively as American soldiers.

Karzai,s view on SMA and the Alizai

¶6. (C) Spenzada said there was no decision or timeline for reinstating SMA as Helmand Governor. He explained that Karzai sees control of the Alizai as key to improving stability in the province, and he was convinced only SMA could bring control t the Alizai. The Alizai are the majority and hold control in the troubled districts of Kajaki, Musa Qala and Sangin. Karzai believes the Alizai dominate the Barakzai, Poplazai, Ishakzai and other Helmand tribes. In Karzai,s calculation, control of the Alizai translates into control over all the weaker tribes, too.

¶7. (C) At a 10/31 meeting with the Ambassador, Governor Mangal disputed SMA,s monolithic control of the Alizai. Mangal pointed to his recent success in installing an Alizai ally as chief of Kajaki district. Despite SMA,s continuing efforts to undermine him, Mangal appeared upbeat about winning more Alizais to his side.

¶8. (C) Spenzada agreed the Alizai were split on their support for SMA, and that the non-Aliza tribes strongly opposed SMA,s return. Spenzada described SMA as a part of the problem and recognized that unrest could return if Karzai reinstated him. Spenzada said he and other Karzai advisors have failed to change Karzai,s mind on reinstating SMA.

¶9. (C) Although unsaid by Spenzada, a key underlying factor i Karzai,s calculation is his belief that SMA can deliver Alizai votes in next year,s election. Karzai,s Helmand vote accounted for six percent of his total support in 2004.

¶10. (C) Spenzada characterized Governor Mangal as a good official and a good person. He encouraged the United States to continue to work through Mangal to increase aid projects

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in Alizai areas, to bolster Mangal,s political position.

Musa Qala: Perceptions of unfulfilled promises

¶11. (C) Musa Qala District sub-governor Mullah Salam has complained that the international community has failed to deliver on reconstruction pledges to Musa Qala. Spenzada also suggested the United States do better. He suggested we bear in mind the promise/deliver problems from Musa Qala as we examine our plans for assistance to the Alizai.

Karzai comments on PRTs undermining local governance

¶12. (SBU) On November 16, Karzai stated at a press conference that PRTs were weakening the government by controlling resources, implementing projects and making arrests. Spenzada explained that Karzai believed the local people were going directly to PRTs for resource requests, and undermining the authority of local officials. Polcouns informed Spenzada that PRTs make an extra effort to redirect requests to local authorities, collaborate confidentially on those requests, and then turn to local authorities to inform the public on those decisions. Spenzada promised to pass along this information to Karzai.

WOOD

Viewing cable 08KABUL3176, SCENESETTER FOR DECEMBER 10-11, 2008 VISIT TO

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
08KABUL3176	2008-12-09 03:03	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

O 090321Z DEC 08
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6364
SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
INFO USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
OSD WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
S E C R E T KABUL 003176

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA FOR A/S BOUCHER AND PMOON
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/CDHA/DG
NSC FOR JWOOD
OSD FOR SECRETARY GATES, USDP EDELMAN AND WILKES
CENTCOM FOR CG CJTF-82 AND POLAD

EO 12958 DECL: 12/08/2018
TAGS PGOV, PREL, PTER, AFIN
SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR DECEMBER 10-11, 2008 VISIT TO
AFGHANISTAN BY SECDEF ROBERT M. GATES

Classified By: Acting DCM Valerie C. Fowler for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

¶1. (C) Embassy Kabul warmly welcomes your visit to Afghanistan. The overall state of the security situation here is more nuanced than the negative drumbeat coming from the media. Steady advances in success by Coalition and Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) do not grab the headlines that a spectacular suicide attack does. Progress in development in support of a balanced COIN strategy continues below the radar screen. Those achievements, however, are hindered and ultimately threatened by poor performance on the governance front.

The Fundamental Challenge of Governance

¶2. (C) Karzai is at the center of the governance challenge. He has failed to overcome his fundamental leadership deficiencies in decisiveness and in confidence to delegate authority to competent subordinates. The result: a cycle of overwork/fatigue/indecision on the part of Karzai, and gridlock and a sense of drift among senior officials on nearly all critical policy decisions.

¶3. (C) Karzai struggles with striking the correct balance between institutional and traditional (i.e. tribal) governance. In fairness, there are no easy answers. He has given a notional nod to General McKiernan,s proposal to support formal agreements between Afghan authorities and district-level councils. The latter would be responsible for certain governance and security functions in their districts. This proposal is aimed at ensuring freedom of travel along the Ring Road, the lack of which undermines public confidence in the Afghan government and in the international community’s efforts. Some questions remain on how to ensure district security arrangements do not create independent local militias.

¶4. (SBU) Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) Director Popal has earned and maintains Karzai,s backing to improve sub-national governance. Popal has launched the Afghan Social Outreach Program (ASOP), to form local councils (separate from McKiernan,s plan) to strengthen ties between sub-national institutional government and the tribes. We will be one of the largest donors to this new and ambitious plan, providing \$6 million for ASOP in three provinces.

Elections

¶5. (C) Next year,s presidential and provincial council elections will be the defining event for 2009. Election factors already dominate nearly everything political here. Karzai,s popularity has fallen through the floor, but the absence of a credible opponent means it is still Karzai,s election to lose. Public ill ease over personal (not national) insecurity and disgust over unconstrained corruption are Karzai,s greatest vulnerabilities. He installed Hanif Atmar as Interior Minister to turn up the heat on both problems. Atmar is talented and may turn around perceptions, but after seven years of unmet expectations Afghans will be hard to convince.

¶6. (C) Politicians and the Kabul punditry are fascinated with the political jockeying between Parliament and the Independent Election Commission (IEC) over the election date. In the end, we expect all will agree to the IEC,s proposal for an August vote, based on security and logistical reasons.

¶7. (C) More problematic is the insecurity in the south and east, which is prompting some) including Karzai, other Pashtuns and some RC-South partners) to raise the specter of Pashtun disenfranchisement and the possible illegitimacy of the vote. It is much too early to judge the prospects of failure. We and Karzai agree the British are not up to the task of securing Helmand, but we also think the expected arrival of additional U.S. combat brigades this spring and summer, in tandem with the constant flow of newly-

minted Afghan troops to the field will provide an adequately secure environment for the election.

Taliban reconciliation

¶8. (C) Karzai's senior-level Taliban reconciliation initiative is more about strengthening his political base and his relationship with the Saudis than anything else. "Negotiations" have been much less tangible in reality than is depicted in the press. The public is split: many welcome the promise (whether real or not) of reduced violence and instability via a possible reconciliation with the Taliban, while others (mainly non-Pashtuns, women, and certain civil society groups) fear a Karzai backroom deal that could harm their political interests or set back hard-fought human rights advances. We have advised Karzai to negotiate from a position of strength and to restate our shared red lines.⁸

Karzai and civilian casualties

¶9. (C) Karzai's recent heated public statements about "bringing down NATO aircraft" and timelines for coalition withdrawal reflect both deep and heartfelt anger, as well as a certain amount of elections grandstanding. Civilian casualties anger him most. General McKiernan has directed substantial changes to coalition tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs), but those cannot eliminate the possibility of civilian casualties, especially when the Taliban has clearly adopted "human shield" tactics. ISAF and the Embassy work increasingly more effectively with Afghan counterparts on improved post-incident response (to affected communities and the media), and investigations.

¶10. (C) Karzai hears of these efforts, but is not mollified. You can address his upset by acknowledging the problem and recognizing such mistakes hurt us all. In the months since the Shindand incident, and specifically as a response to civilian casualties, the Afghans have drafted a technical framework agreement on security measures, as a means to exert greater control over coalition operations. The Ambassador told Spanta that Washington cannot take this up until after the new Administration is in place, a point you should underscore with Karzai.

Steps to Improve Security

¶11. (C) The Coalition and Afghan security forces have increased our area of control and taken the fight to the Taliban, with increasing effectiveness. The Taliban response has been a forced shift in tactics from insurgency to terrorism to challenge the will of Afghans and the international community. Taliban acts of violence are highly visible and the immediate effect is that ordinary Afghans do feel less safe with random violence - particularly kidnappings - on the rise, and travel around the country more insecure. Atmar is countering, by looking to accelerate reform of the police. We are supporting him. The Focused District Development (FDD) program to retrain and equip the police is going well and will broaden to include the Border Police. Nonetheless, professionalizing the Afghan National Police (ANP) and reforming the Ministry of Interior are ongoing challenges. We also are working with the IDLG, NDS, and the Ministry of Defense to engage community support for security along the highways.

¶12. (C) Our greatest success on the security side is the advances in numbers and capabilities in the Afghan army. The army is the most trusted governmental entity, and is currently leading more than 60 percent of joint military operations. The International Community recently agreed to support the expansion of the army force structure to 134,000 (which includes a 12,000-troop trainee, transient, patient "float"). Army expansion will help meet future security requirements and take some of the pressure off of the police to conduct counterinsurgency operations. The principal challenge for both the army and police training program is a shortage of trainers, either from the U.S. or Allied nations. Karzai recognizes and is grateful for the central role of U.S. security assistance in developing the Afghan security forces. He will welcome reaffirmation of our support for eventual Afghan self-sufficiency and independence in the security and law enforcement fields; however, the army will continue to depend for some years on Coalition enablers such as close air support and intelligence assets.

Survey of Security in Afghanistan by Region

¶13. (SBU) RC-East remains focused on a balanced COIN approach synchronizing operations to protect the populace and push the insurgents out while pursuing mutually reinforcing efforts in development and governance assistance; the Embassy, USAID and CJTF-101 are coordinating more closely than ever USG efforts in RC-East. The Commanders, Emergency Response Program (CERP) funding is critical to delivering quick, effective assistance projects, which, in coordination with USAID and local officials, supports both locally identified needs and longer term development goals. In RC-South, the number and lethality of IED attacks is up dramatically; significantly, in some areas the number of IEDs reported by the public to ANSF or ISAF forces is also up, reflecting public support for the Government. The approximately 2300 Marines of the recently departed 24th MEU carried out successful operations in the Garmsir District in Helmand. The insertion of other U.S. forces into the

South could have a positive impact on Karzai,s confidence and quiet concerns about whether the presidential election can be safely held.

¶14. (SBU) RC-West and RC-North remain relatively quiet, although RC-West has become less stable in the past few months. A rash of kidnappings in Herat, combined with a series of insurgent attacks, including at least one that upset public access to basic needs, had resulted in a widespread lack of confidence in local governance. The GIROA apparently recognized the danger of leaving this key region that borders Iran (and will eventually be linked to Khaf, Iran by rail service) open to growing insurgent movements and the appeal of a parallel source of governance. MoI Minister Atmar has just sacked a number of senior security officials in Herat in response to this popular unrest.

Afghan-Pak relations

¶15. (S) There,s been a sea change in bilateral ties since Musharraf,s exit. Karzai and Zardari have warm relations, which has spread to other parts of the bilateral civilian-side relationship. We also see promising signs of cooperation on the security side) increased coordination and communication between the respective security forces along certain parts of the border, and a November meeting in Islamabad between NDS Director Saleh and ISI Director General Pasha. The two governments also convened a largely symbolic but positive &mini-jirga8 meeting in October. Continuing - though reduced - infiltration from the FATA and the recent Mumbai attacks have done little, however, to diminish Afghanistan,s ongoing distrust of the Pakistan Army and conviction that ISI is supporting rather than countering terrorism.

¶16. (U) We very much look forward to your visit.

DELL

Viewing cable 08KABUL3237, KARZAI URGES CODEL MCCAIN TO SUPPORT ZARDARI AND

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
08KABUL3237	2008-12-21 06:06	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO1674

PP RUEHPW

DE RUEHBUL #3237/01 3560624

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

P 210624Z DEC 08

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6473

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 003237

NOFORN

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, S/CRS

STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG

NSC FOR JWOOD

OSD FOR MCGRAW

CG CJTF-101, POLAD, JICCENT

EO 12958 DECL: 12/20/2018

TAGS PREL, PGOV, PTER, MASS, KDEM, AF, PK

SUBJECT: KARZAI URGES CODEL MCCAIN TO SUPPORT ZARDARI AND

WELCOMES INCREASE IN U.S. FORCES

Classified By: A/DCM Val Fowler for Reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. Accompanied by the Charge d'Affaires, Senators John McCain, Joseph Lieberman and Lindsey Graham dined with President Karzai at the Presidential Palace December 6. Flanked by many from his cabinet, including the Foreign and Defense Ministers, Karzai urged the Senators to secure strong U.S. support for Pakistan President Zardari in his efforts to free Pakistan from extremism, noted the progress Afghanistan has made with the support of international assistance, welcomed incoming U.S. forces and described efforts to combat widespread corruption. He also stressed the toll that civilian casualties took on public support for military operations.

APPRECIATION FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT TO AFGHANISTAN

¶2. (C) Karzai thanked the Senators for U.S. assistance and shared his optimism regarding the future of the bilateral relationship: "Never before has a country welcomed a foreign presence so much. (Our cooperation) will be a great success." Karzai then joked that "reconstruction is something we complain about, but inside we are very happy with it. We complain because we want more money from you." Karzai went on to describe how small businesses have sprung up all around the country in the last four years as a result of international assistance, and how those businesses are vital to Afghanistan's sustainability. Karzai also touched on other areas of progress, claiming that this year Afghanistan would see 50,000 students graduate from college whereas a few years ago, there were not 50,000 college graduates in the country.

PAKISTAN'S ZARDARI: A GOOD MAN TRYING TO FREE HIS COUNTRY OF EXTREMISTS

¶3. (C) Responding to Senator McCain's comment that the delegation had just arrived from meetings in Islamabad, Karzai stressed the importance of U.S. support for Pakistan's president, calling Zardari "a good man who wants to free his country from extremists." Karzai noted that he had an excellent relationship with Zardari and felt the two had a special rapport, adding "never in 60 years of Pakistan's history have we had such good bilateral relations." Karzai described how, when he arrived in Istanbul for trilateral talks earlier this month, Zardari called him directly and asked to meet with him privately before their official meeting the following day. Zardari came to Karzai's room where they chatted over dinner for hours, "covering all topics imaginable." Returning to the issue of U.S. support for Zardari, Karzai said the Pakistani President felt "lonely, threatened and under siege." Zardari believed he received too little support from the international community: India was still wary because of historic enmity between the two countries; Russia withheld its support because Pakistan had helped the Afghans defeat the Soviets; China disapproved of Zardari's close relationship with the U.S.; and the Arab countries wouldn't support him because he wasn't "one of them." Karzai urged the Senators: "America is the only place he can turn - help him. Give him all you can; forget his past."

NEED TO FOCUS ON COMMUNITIES AND FIGHTING CORRUPTION

¶4. (C) Calling himself "a traditional Afghan," Karzai said his government won the previous election because of the backing of the tribes, but lack of progress and growing insecurity at the local level had left many communities disillusioned and vulnerable to militants. The government needed to re-establish those ties and focus on strengthening local infrastructure. Karzai said he had raised this issue with Senator Biden when Biden suggested sending more troops and more civilians to support Afghanistan's reconstruction and security efforts. Karzai agreed those elements were important, but told Biden that even more important was shifting the assistance focus to the community or village level and concentrating on capacity-building to bolster the traditional element of Afghan society.

¶5. (C) Karzai acknowledged the scope of corruption that plagues the country, saying "the more we dig (into corruption), the more scared we get." The President told the Senators he had fired Governor Raufi of Kandahar after a three-month investigation (the same amount of time Governor Raufi was in the position following the dismissal of the

KABUL 00003237 002 OF 002

previous governor). He also noted his recent firing of the Minister of Transport for embezzling funds linked to construction of Kabul's new airport. Responding to the question of whether either of these men would be prosecuted, Karzai confirmed prosecutors were pursuing a case against the Minister of Transport. Karzai also tied the prevalence of widespread, but low-level corruption to the despair of many impoverished Afghans: "When someone doesn't have hope for the future, he will steal." On the other hand, Karzai related a story from a trip to Paktya when residents challenged him on his "negative" radio addresses: "Things are better than you say, don't you know that?" Karzai told them he recognized the improvements but just wanted everyone to do still better.

AFGHANISTAN WELCOMES INCOMING U.S. FORCES

¶6. (C/NF) Karzai welcomed the incoming U.S. brigades, but took the opportunity to question the effectiveness of the British in Helmand. "Freeing Helmand from the Taliban is important: Helmand is not with us." He then semi-seriously suggested that everyone stop taking notes, "especially my people," and related an anecdote in which a woman from Helmand asked him to "take the British away and give us back the Americans." He said there was a broad understanding among Afghans of the value of American forces, and that he regularly hears requests from the South to increase U.S. troop presence there. "Afghans don't recognize NATO, they recognize America," said Karzai. He offered the example of a villager from Uruzgan who gave the Dutch Task Force Commander a present, saying, "Take that back to Washington with you."

KARZAI: AFGHANS WILLING TO DIE IN BATTLE BUT DO NOT UNDERSTAND CIVILIAN CASUALTIES

¶7. (C) Karzai raised the issue of civilian casualties, stressing the impact these deaths had on public opinion and support. "Freeing Afghanistan from terrorists is important and building institutions is important, but even more important is making sure Afghan civilians don't suffer in the pursuit of these terrorists." He emphasized that these incidents were "pushing our population away from us." The Afghan people will be your best allies, he asserted, but we have to find a way to solve this. "Afghans will die on the field of battle a thousand times (fighting militants), but civilian casualties they do not understand."

ELECTIONS: KARZAI PRAISES SENATOR McCain's GRACIOUSNESS

¶8. (C) Karzai praised Senator McCain for what he called "a marvelous concession speech" and noted that he had called Senator McCain immediately afterward to congratulate him on the speech. Karzai added, "I hope that if (Afghanistan's) election results go a different way next year, I will have 20 percent of the guts you showed and be able to concede as graciously as you did."

¶9. (U) CODEL McCain did not have the opportunity to clear this message.
WOOD

Viewing cable 09KABUL71, FRUSTRATIONS CONTINUE IN SANGIN DISTRICT

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL71	2009-01-14 11:11	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO6482

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DE RUEHBUL #0071/01 0141152

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6689

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 000071

SIPDIS

KABUL FOR USFOR-A COS,

DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, EUR/RPM

STATE PASS USAID FOR ASIA/SCAA

NSC FOR WOOD

OSD FOR WILKES

CG CJTF-101 POLAD

EO 12958 DECL: 01/14/2014

TAGS PGOV, PREL, PTER, KDEM, AF

SUBJECT: FRUSTRATIONS CONTINUE IN SANGIN DISTRICT

Classified By: PRT Director Valerie C. Fowler for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary

¶1. (SBU) The UK PRT/Task Force Helmand (TFH) transported Helmand Governor Mangal, several of his staff and members of the local media to the Sangin District for an extensive outreach program. January 5, 2009. The visit lasted six hours and included visits to the District Center, Sangin School, Sangin Bazaar and the under-construction industrial park. It was the Governor's second trip to the city in three months. In practical terms the visit was a serious setback for the British PRT's relationship with Governor Mangal as the lack of visible progress in Sangin is clearly frustrating Mangal.

Governor Mangal's Frustrations

¶2. (U) The Governor has been pushing the PRT/TFH to expand the secure areas in and around the city but during the visit to Sangin he was only allowed about 200 meters beyond the FOB perimeter and was unable to walk through the bazaar. He had sent his security staff forward to work with the UK Stabilization officer in anticipation of having 500 people attend the event. However, a Taliban threat the previous night affected coordination for the event and only 100 local residents attended the Shura.

¶3. (SBU) Prior to departing Sangin, the Governor called a meeting with the UK leadership and US PRTOFF and expressed his displeasure with the situation and PRT/TFH efforts in Sangin. He said, "Stop calling it the Sangin District and start calling it the Sangin Base, all you have done here is built a military camp next to the city. I asked you people to do reconstruction and yet the District Governor remains in the FOB and how can you expect a city to recover if the Bazaar is not in the security zone." Mangal said he would direct the District Governor to establish a compound in the city and he wanted the PRT to deliver reconstruction, schools, clinics, and roads, with the bazaar being the heart of an economic zone, as it is in Garmsir.

¶4. (SBU) Also present during the day were the ANA commander and District Governor who leveled several charges that UK troops were searching compounds, walking on the roofs of homes and treating the local population badly -- including pointing weapons at people and going into areas where women were working. These comments were raised during the Shura and in early meetings the Governor had with the elders. In the public forum of the Shura, Mangal strongly defended the ISAF forces, work and called upon the local community to work with ISAF to defeat the Taliban. In the private meeting these comments from the local leadership inflamed an already tense situation, and caused Mangal to say that PRT coordination must be improved as well as the attitude toward the local population. PRT/TFH noted that there has been progress in many other areas of Helmand, and reminded the Governor that Musa Qala, Garmsir and Nad Ali operations all occurred since the UK had liberated Sangin and there have never been sufficient, ISAF or Afghan forces, to control the whole district.

PRT/TFH Frustrations

¶5. (C) Following the visit, the PRT and Task Force leadership convened to review the day's events. It was clear from the discussion the UK is also frustrated with the situation in Sangin and all had hoped for greater progress by this point. UK leadership seems to be divided into two camps. The first wants to do no more in Sangin and move resources from the area into Gereshk and Garmsir where progress is possible and the population is more supportive; the military seems to favor this route. The second camp (the civilian approach) wants to simply hold what they have and wait for the U.S. to interject troops and funds they think will allow them to re-allocate forces and perhaps expand the Sangin Zone.

Comment

KABUL 00000071 002 OF 002

¶6. (C) Enemy forces are still within 500-600 meters of the District Center and UK soldiers told DOS PRTOFF that at the edge of the city, "Cowboy Country begins." Any sizeable reduction in UK forces would almost certainly bring the District Center under regular indirect fire and further destabilize an already tenuous situation. The UK effort in Helmand is already in a "wait and see" mode, wildly speculating when and where U.S. troops will go, obsessed about CERP amounts, and doing nothing to correct the difficult situation already in Sangin.

¶7. (C) During the visit, Mangal made a strong reconciliation push to the assembled body, saying he was willing to meet with anyone and guarantee their safety if they wanted to discuss reconciliation. The message was clearly directed to the absent Alizai leadership, leaving the next move up to them.

The offer was well received by the group and DOS PRTOFF believes that if Mangal can sustain his outreach efforts to Sangin, and deliver more reconstruction and development programs, he has a chance to bring in the fence sitters and undermine some of the Alizai support still reserved for Sher Mohammid Akunzda. WOOD

Viewing cable 09KABUL140, VICE PRESIDENT-ELECT BIDEN AND SENATOR GRAHAM

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL140	2009-01-20 10:10	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO0510

OO RUEHPW

DE RUEHBUL #0140/01 0201040

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

O 201040Z JAN 09

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6866

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KABUL 000140

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, EUR/RPM

STATE PASS USAID FOR ASIA/SCAA

NSC FOR WOOD

OSD FOR WILKES

CG CJTF-101 POLAD

EO 12958 DECL: 01/15/2019

TAGS PGOV, PREL, PTER, MARR, MASS, AF

SUBJECT: VICE PRESIDENT-ELECT BIDEN AND SENATOR GRAHAM

DISCUSS SECURITY IN HELMAND

REF: A. KABUL 65 B. KABUL 71

Classified By: By Ambassador William Wood for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. Vice President-elect Joseph Biden and Senator Lindsay Graham visited Camp Bastion in Helmand Province January 11 and were briefed by Brigadier General Gordon Messenger, the British Commander of Task Force Helmand, and UK Senior Civilian Advisor Hugh Powell. COMISAF General McKiernan, RC-South Commander Major General Mart De Kruif and British Ambassador Sherard Cowper-Coles also attended. Helmand Governor Mangal also discussed security and U.S. assistance with Biden and Graham. During the UK briefings, Ambassador Wood and U.S. Brigadier General Nicholson met separately with Mangal to hear his concerns and recommendations for next steps. End Summary.

Task Force Helmand Briefing for Biden and Graham

¶2. (C) The UK leadership briefing was somber. Senior Civilian Advisor Hugh Powell noted the UK had only 4000 troops in Afghanistan's largest province, equaling one-third the troop density of RC East. British troops were covering the bulk of the population centers, but Powell noted that, given stretched resources, the British were aiming for "good enough." (This is a phrase that is being used more often by the UK civilian and military leadership.) BG Messenger explained that his forces and the Afghan National Army were largely fixed to their Forward Operating Bases and PBs.

¶3. (C) Powell raised the issue of building governance and Biden broke in to press Powell on what "building governance" meant in practical terms. Powell described governance as having a few key people in the right places. Biden asked for more specifics about what was needed. Powell made a strong pitch for a unified command of the police mentors under CSTC-A. Biden asked where these mentors would come from and Powell suggested that non-troop contributing countries could provide them.

¶4. (C) Senator Graham asked attendees for a definition of success (in establishing greater security). BG Messenger defined coverage of more area as a key element of success. COMISAF and RC-S MG de Kruif added that Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) control of Afghanistan's large cities - even in unstable provinces - is now the norm.

Mangal Presentation to Biden and Graham

¶5. (C) Governor Mangal, accompanied by Afghan National Army (ANA) General Mohaidan and Helmand Police Chief Colonel Shirzad, briefed the visiting

officials on his efforts to combat terrorism, corruption and narcotics in Helmand. He welcomed increased support from the U.S., and described significant progress in Helmand, noting eight out of 13 districts were now under government control. However, Mangal quickly added there was still much to do to improve security in the province. Even in the eight districts under GIROA control, the security footprint was far too small; more forces could expand the security zones around the cities to allow communities room to promote commerce and civil engagement. Mangal observed there was still no presence in Baghran and Vashir in northern Helmand or in Kanashin or Dishu in the south.

¶6. (C) The Governor made clear his view that U.S. forces are urgently needed. New forces should help secure the open border with Pakistan, while the capabilities of the ANSF could be strengthened to support any mission. He praised the work of the ANA and Afghan National Police (ANP) and said that with additional help they would take on more missions. He noted that the October attack against Lashkar Gah was repulsed by the ANSF, well supported by ISAF forces. Coordination between these security forces was excellent and he expressed full confidence the U.S. forces would work well with Helmand's ANSF leadership.

¶7. (C) Thanking Mangal for his efforts and praising his hard work, Biden then discussed President-Elect Obama's desire to establish a new contract with Afghanistan, a message Biden had already shared with President Karzai (Ref A). Biden

KABUL 00000140 002 OF 003

stressed the importance of improved governance by the central government and the need for increased capacity in the ANSF; international forces alone could not bring security and prosperity to Afghanistan. The U.S. was prepared to increase assistance and would sustain existing commitments, but the GIROA needed to actively tackle corruption and support more effective governors and military leaders - like Mangal and Mohaidan.

¶8. (C) Biden continued, saying the U.S. government was committed to long-term support for Afghanistan. He cautioned, however, that if the Afghan government failed to effectively address key problems, such as poor governance, poppy cultivation, and corruption, it would be difficult to retain the strong U.S. public support necessary to continue large-scale assistance to Afghanistan.

Mangal Calls for Extension of "Garmsir Model"

¶9. (C) While the Helmand Task Force briefed Biden and Graham, Governor Mangal met with the Ambassador and BG Nicholson. The Ambassador thanked the Governor for his hard work and congratulated him on the large Counter Narcotics Shura he conducted January 4 in Lashkar Gah. Mangal stressed he was fully engaged in improving security, fighting corruption and building the capacity of the Afghan security forces. He was confident incoming U.S. forces

would be able to achieve progress in extending security in north and south Helmand.

¶10. (C) Raising concerns regarding the UK security strategy, Mangal described his disappointment during a recent visit to Sangin. He noted that the bazaar in central Sangin was still outside the security zone; the situation in Kajaki was much the same. "I do not have anything against them (the British) but they must leave their bases and engage with the people." He said even in Nad Ali the area of control was still too small.

¶11. (C) The Ambassador asked if the problem in Sangin was rooted in the civilian or military approach. Mangal said he thought both elements were at fault because there was "neither development and nor security" for the town. Mangal explained that the approach of the U.S. Marines in Garmsir was the right model for promoting community security in Helmand. The forces had remained in place for enough time to allow the bazaar, schools and clinics to reopen and then they planned a successful handover to ensure the new security zone could be maintained by the UK and the ANSF. Unfortunately, the UK has not built on the U.S. achievement by expanding the security zone around Garmsir still further.

¶12. (C) Mangal said he had told the UK team that even if they brought in thousands of additional troops, they would need a new plan and a shift of focus to connect to the people. As in Garmsir, success lay in clearing a large enough area around the town to encompass the bazaar, establishing visible reconstruction and development projects and engaging directly and often with local residents.

¶13. (C) The Ambassador thanked the Governor for his detailed and frank assessment, agreeing the situation posed a serious challenge. He said the UK was working well with the U.S. and that he was confident the British shared our vision for the region. Now, we must emphasize to them that the bazaar equals the city and the city equals hope - together this represents Afghanistan delivering security and economic development to its people.

Mangal: Promoting Successful Communities and Undermining SMA

¶14. (C) The Governor appreciated the chance to share key concerns with Ambassador and BG Nicholson. The Governor is a skilled politician and clearly had no intention of embarrassing the UK leadership, but wanted to highlight the Garmsir model as the right formula for Helmand. His focus on Sangin also has a strong political element. If he can successfully move Sangin into a "Garmsir Model," he knows opposition strongman Sher Muhammad Akhundzada (SMA) will be weakened and some Alizai may move away from his camp. Progress in Sangin would be a preemptive political strike against SMA. This will become more important as poppy eradication kicks off and efforts are launched against narco facilities in the upper Sangin Valley.

KABUL 00000140 003 OF 003

WOOD

Viewing cable 09KABUL165, CENTCOM COMMANDER PETRAEUS JAN 20 MEETING WITH

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL165	2009-01-23 07:07	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

O 230734Z JAN 09

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6962

INFO AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

S E C R E T KABUL 000165

EO 12958 DECL: 01/22/2019

TAGS PINR, PREL, PTER, AF

SUBJECT: CENTCOM COMMANDER PETRAEUS JAN 20 MEETING WITH

PRESIDENT KARZAI

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood, U.S. Embassy Kabul, Reasons: 1.4 (B and D)

Summary

1.(S) On January 20, CENTCOM Commander Petraeus, accompanied by Ambassador Wood and CENTCOM staff, met with President Karzai and his senior National Security staff.

India/Pakistan

2.(S) Petraeus asked Karzai to urge India not to curtail its cooperation with Pakistan. India would never have more positive Pakistani leadership than Zardari, Gailani, Kiayani, and Pasha and, in spite of the difficulties, now was the time to try to make progress in the relationship. Karzai said the U.S. should urge China to press Pakistan, over whom they had great influence, to cooperate with Afghanistan and with India. He noted that the Indians were prepared to offer Afghanistan light attack helicopters. A short discussion followed highlighting the adverse reaction in Pakistan to Indian provision of military equipment to Afghanistan.

Civilian Casualties and Afghan Participation in Special Ops

3.(S) President Karzai raised the civilian casualty issue. Petraeus assured him that the U.S. was taking every step to minimize civilian casualties for both humane and policy reasons. He noted the importance of the new tactical directive. Petraeus cited recent reports by the respected Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission that clearly put the onus on the terrorists for civilian casualties, although it also called for more thorough and transparent investigation of allegations by the coalition.

4.(S) Petraeus noted that the increase of 30,000 U.S. troops next year would also increase combat, leading to the possibility of increased civilian casualties in the short term. President Karzai asked if we really knew who we were fighting. Petraeus was categorical that we had confidence in our intelligence and believed we knew who the enemy was. Karzai said that Afghans were suspicious of the U.S. because of the situation in Helmand. &The tribes must back you,8 he said, and that does not mean recreating tribal militias.

5.(S) Petraeus noted that Karzai had not acted on our request for 100 Afghans to accompany our special operations forces on night raids. Karzai argued that 100 Afghans would not give Afghanistan meaningful control over the operation but would force them to take responsibility when a mistake was made. He promised to study the issue further and called for greater Afghan participation in both the selection of targets and the implementation of operations. Petraeus suggested that on a pilot project basis we might consider putting more Afghans with one of our special strike forces so that they could in reality conduct the operation. He emphasized the importance that the U.S. should remain in a position to conduct after-action site exploitation for intelligence purposes.

6.(S) Karzai raised the issue of the use of dogs in house raids. He said it was unacceptable in the Afghan culture and was used by Taliban propaganda to undermine support for the coalition and the government. Interior Minister Atmar, with Karzai's support, argued that if Afghans were allowed to be "first through the door," they were prepared to run the risk of not using dogs in order to respect cultural sensitivities.

Afghan Taliban

7.(S) Karzai raised the Quetta Shura. He said that Afghans didn't understand why the U.S was making such an effort inside of Afghanistan, but was failing to go after the Taliban in Quetta. They thought either "the U.S. has been deceived by Pakistan" or "there was some secret deal" not to go after the Quetta Shura "because Pakistan was more important to the U.S. than Afghanistan." He stressed the need to be able to go back to the Afghan people and make it clear that the U.S. was serious about defeating Afghanistan's enemies.

8.(S) Petraeus assured Karzai that we considered the Afghan Taliban an important enemy which we were confronting in every way we could. He underlined our vital national interest in preventing global terrorism from ever again using Afghanistan as a launching pad. Karzai nodded affirmatively throughout the General's presentation and said that the people of Afghanistan wanted to see more clearly that the U.S. would not allow Afghanistan to be a base for terrorism again.

Relations with New Administration

9.(S) Karzai raised recent critical statements attributed to Senator Clinton, but said he was enthusiastic about his relationship with her. Karzai stressed the need for us to address frankly our problems with each other and respond seriously to the concerns of each side. He praised the visit of Secretary Gates shortly after the Shindand incident in August and said that the visit had served to completely defuse the Shindand incident.

10.(S) Early in the discussion, Petraeus said that he would be returning to Washington for a first meeting with President Obama, and offered to convey a message from Karzai. Karzai returned to the message throughout the discussion, highlighting the need for mutual respect and cooperation, the need to resolve the civilian casualties issue and increase Afghan participation in special operations, and a tougher line on sanctuaries in Pakistan.

2009

11.(S) In conclusion, Karzai said that 2009 would be a difficult and important year. Additional troops would make a big difference. Successful elections would be crucial.

Other Comments

12.(S) Karzai then invited other Afghan participants at the table to make comments. Minister of Defense Wardak called for increased coordination in the battle space, especially with the proliferation of the additional forces and additional players. He also argued for the eventual further increase of the National Army beyond the planned 134,000.

13.(S) Foreign Minister Spanta expressed concern about the "fragmentation" of the international community and urged the U.S. to play a more active role in making development assistance more coherent. He said that the target should not simply be to rebuild Afghanistan but to genuinely increase aid effectiveness.

14.(S) Minister of Interior Atmar said that it was important that our two constituencies -- the Afghan public and the U.S. public -- be able to see the two allies united and able to solve problems between them. He said there was still strong support for the American presence. He stressed the need: (1) to strengthen Afghan government institutions including the police, (2) to make clear that the U.S. cares for the wellbeing of Afghan citizens, and (3) to take meaningful action against the sanctuaries against the Taliban in Pakistan.

15.(S) NDS Director Saleh simply noted the need for a larger NDS and asked for U.S. support.

WOOD

Viewing cable 09KABUL376, PRESIDENT KARZAI PREVIOUS STRATEGIC REVIEW IDEAS

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL376	2009-02-21 04:04	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO8838

PP RUEHDBU RUEHPW

DE RUEHBUL #0376/01 0520427

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

P 210427Z FEB 09

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7443

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 000376

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 02/16/2019

TAGS PGOV, PREL, PTER, SNAR, AF, PK, IR

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT KARZAI PREVIEWS STRATEGIC REVIEW IDEAS

FOR USD/P FLOURNOY

¶1. (C NF) President Karzai on February 15 told Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Flournoy that his government welcomed the opportunity to join in the USG's strategic policy review. He suggested his team likely would advocate for: 1) greater efforts to target terrorist leaders and sanctuaries in Pakistan; 2) additional work to strengthen Afghan communities to enhance security; and 3) new multilateral talks with individual groups of Taliban who agree to respect the Afghan constitution. On the contentious issue of civilian casualties, Karzai expressed satisfaction with the recent agreement on specific military operations and a willingness to move forward. The President predicted Iran would respond positively to the new US administration's offers of dialog.

FOCUS ON PAKISTAN

¶2. (C NF) The fight for stability in Afghanistan must be taken to the terrorist planners and their sanctuaries in Pakistan, Karzai said. He noted he had long argued for greater efforts in this direction, including in public remarks in Kabul in 2005. Karzai expressed frustration that the close relationship between the United States and Pakistan had yet to yield a serious campaign against terrorist leaders operating there. Instead, he argued, Afghanistan paid the price of perceived US and Pakistani reluctance to grapple with the problem. Pakistan, of course, had long used Islamic fundamentalism as a policy tool. But "Pakistan is a puzzle to me now," Karzai admitted. "I see things happening on a massive scale in the northwest that are not the work of ISI," the Pakistani intelligence service.

¶3. (C NF) On cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan, Karzai said, "Zardari is of a different (positive) mindset." The Pakistani President has yet to move, however, from good intentions to implementation, and is weak. Karzai asked Flournoy whether the US strategic review envisioned more direct bilateral military cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan, with the US or NATO as broker, or whether only greater US-Pakistan military cooperation was under consideration. Flournoy replied that the regional strategic review, while urgent and extremely important to the new US administration, was only just underway.

RENEW COMMUNITY SUPPORT

¶3. (C NF) The President underscored his analysis that the support of communities was key to countering the insurgency. When I first returned to Afghanistan, Karzai mused, I had only 14 American soldiers with me. But we had the Afghan people with us, they believed in the moral correctness of what we were doing, and even Helmand was safe for girls to go to school. Now, 4000 (sic) British soldiers are in Helmand, and the people are not safe. "We must stand on a higher moral platform than the bad guys," the President said.

¶4. (C NF) Community empowerment is not about the arming the tribes, Karzai noted. Media speculation about this approach is misleading. We need ordinary people, the elders and the villagers, to trust in the government's ability to do the right thing, and give them what they need to be able to defend themselves, the President said. In turn, the government must minimize civilian casualties, limit night raids, and make sure women and children are protected during military operations. Increasing the numbers and capabilities of the police and army, and strengthening government institutions, are also important, Karzai added.

TALK TO AFHGAN TALIBAN

¶5. (C NF) Afghanistan and the US together should formally launch a process of peace-making with those Taliban who are not al Qaeda or part of any terrorist network, Karzai proposed. There are groups and individuals who would accept the Afghan constitution, who have "run away" from us because of our own failings, he said. Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and religious leaders have the right resources to make such a process work and should participate. But US partnership with Afghanistan is key to success and has been the missing element in efforts to date.

¶6. (C NF) If there really was a Taliban movement, Karzai said, I would be greatly worried by US reports that Iran is supporting the Taliban. But I do not think the Taliban is really a movement. It is the result of three decades of past Pakistani policy, plus a lot of poor, desperate kids who lack

KABUL 00000376 002 OF 002

connection to a family or community.

FRIENDS DESPITE FRICTIONS

¶7. (C NF) On several topics, Karzai said, recent frictions in the bilateral relationship represent "annoyances" between "friends." "We have been hurt by some recent statements," he said, and also I know my "loud speeches" on civilian casualties hurt your feelings. Still, the two nations have common interests, and the two peoples are friends. Afghanistan is very grateful for the generosity of US aid in reconstruction and development. The agreement on civilian casualties is a "good start" and we can now move forward to implement it and so speak with one voice on this issue. On Iran, Karzai said, Afghanistan cannot be a channel, but we can help you convey the nuances of your demands. Iran is likely to respond positively to US offers of dialog even though it will never give up its nuclear programs. Progress in curbing poppy cultivation this year probably largely reflects market forces such as high wheat prices. Afghans consider poppy "not respectable," however, and with stability and hope for the future will respond to international efforts to replace its cultivation with alternate livelihoods.

¶8. (C) Comment: Coming in the immediate aftermath of Special

Representative Holbrooke's visit, this meeting reflected Karzai's effort to stick by his agreement to re-found the relationship. His calm, constructive comments on civilian casualties contrast sharply to his attitude previously.

¶9. (U) Undersecretary Flournoy cleared this cable. WOOD

Viewing cable 09KABUL467, NEGATIVE INFLUENCE OF CERTAIN KARZAI ADVISORS

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL467	2009-03-02 13:01	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO6765

PP RUEHDBU RUEHPW

DE RUEHBUL #0467/01 0611338

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

P 021338Z MAR 09

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7574

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 000467

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 07/07/2018

TAGS PGOV, PREL, AF

SUBJECT: NEGATIVE INFLUENCE OF CERTAIN KARZAI ADVISORS

REF: KABUL 139

Classified By: CDA Christopher Dell for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C/NF) SUMMARY. Individuals formerly close to President Karzai attribute blame for Karzai's recent unpredictable behavior to the influence of a trio of Palace advisors. Critics say Palace Chief of Staff Mohammad Daudzai, Education Minister Farooq Wardak, and Information and Culture Minister Abdul Karim Khoram provide misleading advice and conspire to isolate Karzai from more pragmatic (and pro-Western) advisors in a purposeful effort to antagonize Western countries, especially the United States. These three share a common link to the mujahideen-era Hezb-e-Islami organization, stoking suspicions, particularly among non-Pashtuns, that their efforts are part of a larger conspiracy. But in a rumor-driven country such as Afghanistan, assumptions can far outstrip reality. There is a wide consensus that these three currently have Karzai's ear, but allowances have to be made for Afghan rumor mongering and Karzai's own conspirational outlook.

Karzai's Advisor Bubble

¶2. (C/NF) Many Karzai supporters, some who have been with the president since his transitional administration and 2004 presidential campaign, have

expressed frustration over their lack of direct access to Karzai. They say Chief of Staff Daudzai has restricted access to the president and prevented other Palace staff from meeting alone with Karzai. When petitioners do receive meetings, Daudzai is always present. MPs also complain Karzai is less accessible than he was two years ago, and repeatedly ignores their meeting requests. Many former allies have either withdrawn their support for his re-election or have held off on publicly committing to his campaign (reftel).

¶3. (C/NF) Palace Chief of Policy Sebghatullah Sanjar said Daudzai feeds the president misinformation and highlights negative coverage of his government, turning Karzai against former allies and influencing his opinions of people he has not yet met. Sanjar said Daudzai began to cut off Karzai's one-on-one meetings with other Palace staff in 2008, though Sanjar succeeded in seeing the president without Daudzai twice in the last two months. Sanjar and others say Daudzai is Karzai's most influential advisor on Afghanistan's foreign policy and reconciliation initiatives. Many believe Daudzai is steering the president into closer ties with Iran, Russia, and Taliban leaders.

¶4. (C/NF) Sanjar describes Karzai as a "lonely and alone man" who suspects his inner circle is leading him in the wrong direction, but does not know who else to trust. The president pays significant attention to the mostly negative media coverage of his government, perpetuating his suspicions that enemies are "out to get him." Daudzai and Khoram have convinced Karzai to take a harder line against his critics, regardless of whether they are traditional rivals or allies providing constructive criticism. Sanjar suggests this advice is a factor in Karzai's emotional reactions to civilian casualty incidents and his publicized dialogue with Russia. Former Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah claimed Daudzai and Farooq Wardak know how to manipulate Karzai's thought process and tendency to make emotional decisions based on unvetted information. Abdullah also asserts that Karzai is increasingly paranoid, and prone to a conspirational outlook on life, leading him to blame all problems on others and unable to see his own role in mistakes.

¶5. (C/NF) FM Spanta objects to Daudzai's conduct on limiting access, including for Spanta, and to Daudzai's policy influence. They have a cool relationship. Palace Deputy Chief of Staff Hodayra Etemadi affirms the observations of others on Daudzai's ill influence over Karzai. She distrusts her boss, and has recommended the Embassy consider carefully what kinds of information it shares with Daudzai. MFA Chief of Protocol Hamid Sidiq is convinced that Daudzai, who once served as Afghanistan's ambassador to Tehran, is working to advance Tehran's interests ahead of the United States vis-a-vis the Palace. Sidiq reported that Daudzai recently overruled an MFA decision to turn down a meeting request to Karzai by an 8-person delegation of Iranian television officials. Earlier that day the Palace had limited an official Canadian delegation to five members to see Karzai.

¶6. (C/NF) Information Minister Khoram and Education Minister Wardak get their fair share of criticism as well. Social moderates like Lower House MP

Shukria Barakzai (Kabul, Pashtun), Upper House MP Rida Azimi (Parwan, Tajik), and former Wardak Governor Abdul Jabbar Naeemi blame Khoram for Karzai's increasingly conservative stands on social issues

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and Wardak for the president's hesitance to publicly criticize the Taliban and other insurgent groups. United Front members and other contacts are incensed that Karzai criticizes the United States and other Coalition partners after civilian casualty incidents, but only issues muted statements through his press office or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after deadly insurgent attacks, such as the Feb. 11 attacks on government ministries in Kabul.

The Hezb-e-Islami Connection

¶7. (C/NF) Daudzai, Khoram, and Wardak were members of Hezb-e-Islami (HI) in the 1980s, during the mujahideen campaign against Soviet forces. The majority-Pashtun HI's later rivalry with the Tajik-centric Jamiat-e-Milli and other resistance groups has left a legacy of ethnic-based tension among mujahideen today. None of the three advisors is a member of Hezb-e-Islami Afghanistan, the political party that broke with Gulbuddin Hekmatyar in order to re-join Afghan politics. However, many Tajiks and other non-Pashtuns maintain their suspicions that every promotion or appointment of a former HI member or current HIA member is part of a conspiracy of "Pashtunization" of the government driven by Daudzai, Wardak, and Khoram.

¶8. (C/NF) HIA Chairman Arghandewal suspects Daudzai manipulates Karzai's political views, but denies any connection between his party and the three advisors. Arghandewal, who serves as a tribal advisor to the Karzai, has not had a one-on-one conversation with the president in more than nine months, rendering him an "advisor who does not give advice." He said HIA members are frustrated by the public's association of them with the Daudzai-Wardak-Khoram bloc, since the three have no current ties to the party and were only minor figures in the mujahideen years. Arghandewal, Hekmatyar's chief financial officer for several years, said he may have met Daudzai or Khoram in passing during the 1980s, but only became aware of their HI connections after their current rise to prominence.

Conspiracy or Projection?

¶9. (C/NF) In Afghanistan, all criticism and personal attacks should be taken with a grain of salt and examined carefully for underlying and ulterior motives. That said, the criticism of Karzai's inner circle spans the ideological spectrum and includes detractors from all major ethnic groups. By all accounts, Karzai's access to one-time loyalists has been more limited over the past year. But those who feel loyalty to or pity for the embattled

president may be projecting their frustrations away from Karzai and on to the nearest target, his advisors. Others, mostly ethnic northerners inclined to distrust any Pashtun leader's motives, see the Hezb-e-Islami connections of Daudzai, Wardak, and Khoram as all the proof they need to substantiate their conspiracy theories. But Hezb-e-Islami members tend to be among the most educated Afghan mujahideen, and thus the fact that they may be in positions of technocratic power today - close to Karzai or not - is understandable in a government with a thin pool of competency to draw from.

¶10. (C/NF) For the impartial observer, it is difficult to determine whether these three advisors do indeed have their own agenda or whether Karzai's reliance on their counsel is a reflection of his own political leanings. What is clear, however, is that the characterizations of Karzai's emotional and psychological state by his Afghan critics reported here are by and large consistent with our own observations and dealings with him. DELL

Viewing cable 09KABUL495, IRANIAN INFLUENCE AT PARLIAMENT

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL495	2009-03-03 12:12	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET//NOFORN	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXYZ0004

PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBUL #0495/01 0621208

ZNY SSSSS ZZH (CCY AD38C2C4 MSI2519-695)

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7606

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

S E C R E T KABUL 000495

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C O R R E C T E D COPY CAPTION

EO 12958 DECL: 03/04/2019

TAGS PREL, PGOV, AF, IR

SUBJECT: IRANIAN INFLUENCE AT PARLIAMENT

Classified By: CDA Christopher Dell for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (S/NF) SUMMARY. Iranian government officials routinely encourage Parliament to support anti-Coalition policies and to raise anti-American talking points during debates. Pro-Western MPs say colleagues with close Iranian contacts accept money or political support to promote Iran's political agenda. Some staff members believe Iranian intelligence officials have infiltrated the Parliament's legal and information technology support offices, compromising the professional staff's legal advice and the legislature's electronic communications. Allegations are difficult to verify and may be inspired more by conspiracy theories and inter-ethnic rivalries than actual facts. However, the number of MPs willing to tell us of first-hand encounters with Iranian agents appears to confirm a dedicated effort by Iran to influence Afghan attitudes toward Coalition forces and other issues. End Summary.

Iranian Embassy Relations with Parliament

¶2. (S/NF) Iranian Embassy officials exploit contacts with a number of Afghan politicians to influence Parliament's agenda. Many MPs accuse Hazaras, who like Iran's leaders are mostly Shia Muslims, of having the closest ties with Iran. Moderate Hazaras insist Iranian outreach influences only conservative Hazaras, many of whom received religious educations or lived in Iran while in exile. MPs single out Sayed Hussein Alemi Balkhi (Kabul), Ahmad Ali Jebraili (Herat), and Ustad Mohammad Akbari (Bamyan) as the Hazara MPs who receive the most support from Iran. The Iranian Embassy has also cultivated deep relations with members of opposition groups (including the United Front), Tajik Sayeds, and MPs from Herat and other western provinces.

¶3. (S/NF) Iranian Embassy officers frequently visit Parliament, but rarely sit in the public gallery and usually avoid high-traffic morning hours, according to Parliament watchers. After Iranian-influence allegations exploded a few years ago, the Iranian Embassy began hosting MPs more often at off-site meetings, where other MPs suspect payments are delivered in exchange for commitments to advocate Iranian policies.

¶4. (S/NF) According to several contacts, Iran's top policy goals in Parliament are: increasing criticism of civilian casualty incidents caused by Coalition forces, encouraging the Afghan Parliament to "legalize" foreign forces, advocating rights for Shia (including a separate judicial system), promoting "Persian culture," and limiting Western support to Afghan

media. These subjects often dominate parliamentary debates, even when not on the official agenda.

Iranian Official Hands Over Talking Points to Deputy Speaker

¶5. (S/NF) Lower House Deputy Speaker Mirwais Yaseni (Nangarhar, Pashtun) told PolOff an Iranian intelligence officer visited his office in mid-February, coinciding with the visit of Iran's vice president to Kabul, to pressure him to allow a debate on the status of Coalition forces that would push other scheduled items from the 2/17 agenda (Speaker Yunus Qanooni was out of town, leaving Yaseni to chair the session). The intelligence officer offered to provide "support" to Yaseni if he cooperated. Yaseni declined, only to face the wrath of MPs Balkhi and Akbari, who raised the issue during debate on another item. When Yaseni suggested the MPs wait for a better time to discuss foreign forces, Balkhi accused the deputy speaker of "betraying his country" and being a Western puppet. Yaseni said Balkhi's and Akbari's remarks were identical to the talking points provided to him by the Iranian official earlier that day.

¶6. (S/NF) Other MPs have described similar interactions with Iranians they believe to be embassy-based intelligence officers. Some believe Iranian officers work in conjunction with Karzai's Palace staff to stir up heated reactions from MPs following civilian casualty incidents. Pro-Western MPs worry that Iran exploits such incidents to decrease public support for Coalition troop presence. The Iranian Embassy plays a lower-key role on social issues, paying MPs to support Persian cultural programs and oppose Western countries' support to local media. Despite Iran's ambitious lobbying efforts, there are limits to MPs' willingness to toe the Iranian line. A Lower House debate last November on water rights quickly struck a nationalistic tone, with several MPs accusing Iran of "stealing Afghanistan's water." No MP spoke up to disagree.

Suspicious With Staff, Too

¶7. (S/NF) Parliamentary staffers believe the Iranian Embassy has planted moles in Parliament's legal and information technology offices. An employee in the Lower House's legal affairs and research office told PolOff last fall that his new supervisor was editing the staffer's responses to questions from MPs to reflect Iran-friendly interpretations of Afghan law. Lower House Secretary General Gulam Hassan Gran has repeatedly complained to PolOff that most IT staffers have been trained in Iran and pass electronic communications to the Iranian Embassy. As a result, Gran and other Pashtun staff refuse to use Parliament's email system. Gran's deputy keeps a list of MPs who criticize the U.S. and analyzes trends in anti-U.S. rhetoric.

Comment

¶8. (S/NF) If Iranian efforts to influence MPs are as dedicated as some believe, it means the Iranian government has successfully identified and exploited Parliament's greatest strength: the bully pulpit. The four-year-old Parliament has often struggled to find its role and usually comes out on the losing end in battles with the judicial and executive branches. Still, MPs have been quick learners when it comes to using the media to draw attention to their causes, even if their views are at times incoherent or serve no other purpose than to bad-mouth the government or political rivals. Iran has deftly taken note, forgoing attempts to influence actual legislation and instead exploiting MPs' proclivity for media coverage. By strong-arming MPs to incorporate Iranian talking points into their public statements, Iran has opened a potential channel to influence public and elite opinion against U.S. goals and policies for Afghanistan. At a minimum, Iranian interference has helped keep Parliament bogged down in unproductive debates and away from more pressing matters. DELL

Viewing cable 09KABUL1239, SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: A SNAPSHOT OF THE NORTHEAST

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL1239	2009-05-17 05:05	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

Appears in these articles:
<http://www.spiegel.de>

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INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 KABUL 001239

CORRECTED COPY -TEXT

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SRAP, SCA/FO, SCA/A, EUR/RPM

STATE PASS USAID FOR ASIA/SCAA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/09/2019

TAGS: PGOV PREL KDEM EAID AF

SUBJECT: SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: A SNAPSHOT OF THE NORTHEAST

KABUL 00001239 001.6 of 005

Classified By: PRT and Sub-National Governance Director

Valerie C. Fowler for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (U) Summary: A recent trip to the northeast by a representative of the Embassy's Provincial Reconstruction Team-Sub-National Governance team confirmed the presence there of a number of the same challenges thwarting progress elsewhere in Afghanistan. It also served to dispel a few misconceptions about the region. Among the challenges are poor governance and corruption. Among the misconceptions dispelled are the notions that there are only negligible security issues in the northeast and that development assistance, particularly from the Germans, is readily available to address the most pressing needs. In fact, there appears to be a genuine threat to future ISAF resupply convoys through Kunduz. As far as development aid is concerned, Germans on the ground are frustrated by the limits and constraints under which they have to operate; and funds available from the Hungarians in Baghlan province provide only a drop of help in a desert of need. End Summary.

Security: More Dangers than Sometimes Assumed

¶2. (SBU) The fact that the PRT came under RPG attack during Emboff's visit risked coloring his impressions regarding security in the northeast; but in fact, there do appear to be some serious security issues needing to be addressed. Clearly the most compelling is the festering situation in Chahar Darrah district in Kunduz. It is a bit unnerving to realize that villages literally a stone's throw from the main north-south road linking Kabul to the border crossing with Tajikistan at Sherkan-Bandar are in a security no-go area owing to the presence there of insurgent elements. This is hardly an abstract concern, given increased prospects of ISAF using the road as an important resupply route. A joint ANSF/German operation in the district from late December to mid-January managed to expel mid-level insurgent commanders and suppress low-level fighters. Key leaders, however, have been moving back into the district and the PRT in Kunduz is expecting the worst this summer. As the then-PRT commander reasoned in late March, the Taliban feel a need to surge in order to demonstrate their reach, especially in light of the influx of additional U.S. troops to Afghanistan.

¶3. (C) Rocket attacks on the PRT and a rise in IED incidents in the area are seen as a harbinger of things to come. The same German commander (the position shifts every six months) was more rigorous than some of his predecessors in addressing the insurgent threat, sending his soldiers to patrol in Chahar Darrah even at night. But he expressed frustration at the unwieldiness of the German interagency bureaucracy in Berlin that left the PRT unable to move forward quickly with job- and income-generating projects in

Chahar Darrah at a time when, he felt, such activities could have helped cement gains made in the December-January operation. The increased pace of insurgent attacks in and around Kunduz since that commander's departure have confirmed his worrying predictions. Whether more PRT projects could have prevented the ongoing security downturn in Chahar Darrah is hard to say. The commander himself noted the embarrassed reaction of local residents there at the time of the earlier operation over the New Year period. People told the Germans they were ashamed that international forces had had to come to help -- that Afghan authorities were not paying heed to their calls for help and that Afghans themselves should have been able to address the situation.

¶4. (SBU) Kunduz Governor Omar shares the former PRT commander's view on the fundamental source of the security problem, namely the lack of jobs. Equally important in his view, however, is the absence of a functioning legal system capable of dispensing real punishment to malefactors. He estimates the number of active insurgents in the province as between 150-200 and also anticipates an upsurge in attacks this year, as both Taliban and Hizb-e Islami seek to increase instability for the elections and demonstrate they can and do remain an active threat in the North. The governor further shares the assessment that insurgents are likely to target the expected increase in ISAF resupply convoys transiting the province. He bemoans what he sees as the squandering of earlier popular support for the government as a result of the government's own inability/failure to act decisively in the area. He suggests poppy cultivation was left unchallenged for too long, the disbandment of illegal armed groups was not pursued with enough vigor and ministries have failed to coordinate among themselves or mount effective programs.

¶5. (C) Further to the south, ostensibly peaceful Baghlan

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Province faces a different set of security challenges. As the head of the UNAMA office for the region tells it, even though Baghlan generally flies under the national radar, it actually deserves to be labeled "the wild, wild west." xxxxxxxxxxxx, behind-the-scenes contests for power (including on the part of the provincial chief of police); the influence of local strongmen and former mujahedeen (particularly in northern Baghlan); unchecked poppy cultivation in Andarab district; underlying Tajik-Pashtun tensions; and criminality all combine to undermine stability. Direct insurgent activity appears limited, but criminal elements have fashioned links to the Taliban. Locals have also made themselves available to execute for-hire insurgent missions. The Hungarian PRT does little to address any of these problems. They are not permitted to fire their weapons except in self-defense, do little more than patrol the main roads and undertake no counter-narcotics activities. When two Hungarian de-miners were killed doing their work, Budapest stopped sending mine clearers to the PRT. When the security situation in northeastern Bamyan Province was threatened by Baghlan-based malefactors, it was the New Zealanders who had to cross into Baghlan to address the problem. The PRT sees itself as focused on humanitarian assistance and small-scale development work. Again xxxxxxxxxxxx, his nation's troops are looking to do their short stints in Afghanistan and get back home unscathed.

¶6. (SBU) The head of the Provincial Council (PC) in

Baghlan sees one of the same factors cited by Governor Omar in Kunduz as undermining stability in his province too) namely the inability of the nascent formal legal system to address people,s need for justice. In fact, he claims as one of his PC's singular achievements its intervention to settle legal disputes that the formal legal system failed to resolve in a timely manner. According to the PC chairman, one dispute over a murder had languished for 10 years but was settled in two days once a Council member from the affected district mediated. Another case involving a tribal killing had been with prosecutors and the court for 18 months but was settled in two hours with the Provincial Council's help. It is questionable whether these cases were in fact "resolved" in a way that met formal justice standards, but it is noteworthy that these elected sub-national governance officials clearly believe they have done a service to their constituents and thereby brought the government and people closer by their actions.

Governance) A Weak Reed

¶7. (C) The governors in Kunduz and Takhar provinces are hardly among the country's strongest. While Kunduz Governor Omar certainly talks a good game, the Germans see him as so thoroughly corrupt that they avoid all contact with him to the furthest extent possible. This can hardly make for optimal synchronization of security, governance and development efforts. The PRT insists, however, that to be seen working with the governor would seriously taint them in the eyes of local residents. As a case in point, they suggest their efforts to construct a bridge across the Kunduz River into Chahar Darrah district (an obvious security priority) have been stalled not least because of the

governor's shady dealings with the government land needed for access to the site of the bridge crossing (the Germans also say they had to re-bid the construction contract for the bridge to enable a firm favored by a deputy minister at the Ministry of Reconstruction and Development (MRRD) to come out the winner). Governor Omar himself places a finger of blame on the poor quality of some of his district administrators. In other instance, however, he suggests the Independent Director of Local Governance,s (IDLG) emphasis on education qualifications has saddled districts with officials ignorant of the important local social networks and power relationships. He complains as well about his lack of funds and argues that the inability of some line ministries in Kunduz to spend their full allocations from Kabul exacerbates the problem. The Kunduz PRT's German development advisor had high praise for the activities of USAID's Local Governance and Community Development (LGCD) program in the province but noted the lack of a civil service training institute in Kunduz, the most important city in the northeast.

¶8. (C) While Takhar Governor Ibrahimy may check the Uzbek ethnic box, he appears to have little else going for him, at least judging by a desultory 90-minute meeting he gave to Emboff. Despite evidence to the contrary, according to the governor his province has virtually no major challenges, aside from the inadequacy of international development

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assistance. He suggested that, thanks to his own efforts as well as those of NDS and ANP and the cooperation of local elders and religious leaders, security in the province is good and insurgents are "under control;" weapons have been

surrendered in fully half of the province's districts; women play an active role, including in government service; the Governor makes special efforts to press district administrators working under him to respect human rights; and anti-corruption efforts are underway. He dismissed reports of weapons smuggling through the province as inaccurate and blamed what he admitted is some heroin and opium smuggling on the existence of an active drug market across Takhar's border in Tajikistan. According to the German PRT in Kunduz, Ibrahimi's extortion schemes are netting him \$40,000 a month from Takhar residents.

¶9. (C) If there is a bright spot in governance in the northeast, it may be Governor Barakzai in Baghlan. While it is still early days, xxxxxxxxxxxx sees Barakzai as a breath of fresh air. While the provincial chief of police reportedly ran roughshod over Barakzai's predecessor, the new governor has put the ANP chief off balance (it may help that Barakzai brought with him to Baglan his own bodyguard force). For the moment, the governor appears to have co-opted the police chief as well as the local NDS head, is gaining in prestige among the local movers and shakers and has even gone some distance in quieting unease among the province's large Tajik population over his appointment (he is a Pashtun).

¶10. (C) Comments by some key international stakeholders raise doubts that UNAMA's local operations are likely to contribute much to turning around the situation on governance in the region. The German PRT in Kunduz reports that the local UNAMA office has little to offer, in contrast to UNAMA's facility in Maza-I Sharif. As the PRT sees it, UNAMA's Kunduz office does not coordinate or align donors, has no humanitarian assistance officer and has failed so far

to provide much needed district mapping for Chahar Darrah district. In Baghlan, where UNAMA placed three people late last year, xxxxxxxxxxxx goes so far as to label UNAMA's role in the province "just a joke." He takes aim particularly at what he suggests is a failure by local UNAMA staff to exercise a coordinating role. In UNAMA's defense, the head of UNAMA's regional office in Kunduz notes that personnel reinforcements are in the pipeline. She points in particular to the upcoming addition of a governance unit, with two additional international staffers.

Development: No Pockets are Deep Enough

¶11. (U) Three of the four provinces of the northeast enjoy something of an advantage in having as their "patron" the Germans, who see their mission as development-focused. Germany currently channels 130 million euros a year in assistance to Afghanistan, with 60 percent of this going to the three provinces of Kunduz, Takhar and Badakhshan, as well as to Balkh (home of the German-led Regional Command North). Of those three northeastern provinces, Badakhshan receives the largest share because of its greater needs. The Kunduz corridor also comes in for a fair share of the funding, with Takhar receiving the least. The German Development Agency (GTZ) does, however, maintain an office in Taloqan, Takhar's capital. The Germans are seriously considering rehabilitating and paving the direct road link between Kunduz and Mazar-e Sharif over the next few years, at an estimated cost of 54 million euros for the 60-mile stretch. They were instrumental in getting EC funding for the rehabilitation of the major irrigation system along the Taloqan River in Takhar and are putting 1.6 million euros into repairing the adjacent Khanabad I power station (damaged in the war).

¶12. (U) Such large-scale projects, rather than the quick impact projects that were once a staple of the German PRT in Kunduz, are sought increasingly by the local population. But even for smaller projects, the PRT has tried to better target local desires and needs by establishing a special Provincial Development Fund (PDF). Each of the three provinces in the PRT's area of responsibility is awarded 800,000 euros a year in projects approved by an eight-member panel composed of four Germans and four Afghans, including representative from the respective Provincial Councils and governors' offices.

¶13. (SBU) Despite their best efforts, the Germans in the field in the northeast are frustrated by the cumbersomeness of their own government bureaucracy. As the Kunduz DEVAD explains it, back in 2003 the Berlin ministries with a stake in development assistance worked out an agreement defining the specific sectors to which assistance would be directed.

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These include such areas as drinking water supply, basic education, gender, renewable energy and provision of technical cooperation and advice. The list did not include a sector that is key in this relatively well-watered region, namely agriculture; and this has come to hamper the effectiveness of the overall effort of the PRT. It appears all but impossible to have the basic list of priority sectors reexamined, given the existing balance of interests between the various German ministries. This makes it extremely difficult for the PRT to respond to evolving, sometimes pressing needs. This year, in what they consider a major victory, the PRT managed to extract 500,000 euros in extra

funding from the German Foreign Ministry and the German Bank for Reconstruction and Development (KFW) for urgently needed projects in Chahar Darrah. None of this assistance, however, keeps local authorities from complaining, sometimes bitterly, about their neglect) particularly relative to what they see as truly massive aid being channeled to the country,s east and south.

¶14. (U) Baghlan falls into that unfortunate category of provinces stuck with the fatal combination of a fairly benign environment and a fairly indigent PRT. The result is minimal international development assistance. The Hungarians spend about \$30 million a year to maintain their PRT outpost. They invest another \$3 million a year in development assistance, with \$300,000 directed at infrastructure improvements (the section of the Ring Road in the province south of Pol-i Khumri is still unpaved). The PRT has a budget of \$500,000 for civ-mil quick impact projects. The NGO Hungarian Interchurch Aid (HIA) serves as implementer for much of Hungary's aid.

Self-Sacrifice a Lost Virtue? Yes and No

¶15. (U) A visit to the Baghlan sugar refinery just north of the provincial capital provided a window on the challenges of reviving what little industry or processing capabilities the country still possesses. The mill, which ran from 1929 until 1976 as a private concern, suffered like the rest of the country from decades of war but was reopened in 2005 after being reborn as a private-public partnership. The enterprise was capitalized at 15.6 million euros, with the Afghan government holding a 30 percent stake and the remainder in the hands of two German companies and four local

Afghans. The refinery first produced sugar again in 2006, but its potential has been difficult to realize because of a local roundworm infestation that originated in the former Soviet Union and now covers all of Baghlan. In that year fully 70 percent of the harvest was lost to the infestation. The following year no beets were grown, and in 2008 only 40 hectares of the 260 hectares planted survived. And this was only due to some farmers having planted beets as their second crop) the worms did not have the entire season to do their damage. xxxxxxxxxxxx this is a tragedy for the country since it is currently importing sugar at a cost of \$450 million a year. A possible solution would be to allow fields to lie fallow for a time, but xxxxxxxxxxxx has been unable to convince farmers to follow his advice.

¶16. (SBU) Roundworm is not the only challenge facing the refinery. It was, notoriously, the site of an explosive attack in November 2007 that resulted in death and injury to as many as 75 people, including women and children. A six-member delegation from the Wolesi Jirga's economics committee died in the incident. Although the German development agency (GTZ) does not generally support agricultural projects in Afghanistan, it did come up with the funds to make extensive security improvements to the office/residence complex at the mill. xxxxxxxxxxxx a continuing threat of kidnapping. xxxxxxxxxxxx has also had to hire a local strongman as his assistant to run interference for him with locals seeking to extort this or that advantage for themselves from the plant.

¶17. (U) The problem of locals seeking immediate, personal gain is not confined to the mill. xxxxxxxxxxxx recounts it, the well-known cheese factory across the street from his mill gave local farmers dairy cows to help ensure the factory

would have a steady supply of milk. Much to the annoyance of the managers of that plant, many of the farmers instead sold the animals. xxxxxxxxxxxx complains further that farmers have demanded \$4000 from the mill to clear their own irrigation canals, something they traditionally have done for themselves. xxxxxxxxxxxx suggests a simple assessment of \$2 per head among the farmers would get the job done.

¶18. (U) Elsewhere enlightened self-interest still has a

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place. At least this is what is reported by the Louis Berger Group (LBG) project managers guiding the USAID-funded construction of the 60-mile engineering marvel that is the Feyzabad-to-Kishim highway through the Hindu Kush in Badakhshan Province. This massive \$120-130 million undertaking is forcing a 30-meter wide highway alongside the Mashhad River by means of major hill-leveling and blasting works. If the Germans ultimately do decide to rebuild the direct road between Kunduz and Mazar-e Sharif, then an improved asphalt band will link people and commerce across the entire north of Afghanistan, from Feyzabad in the east to Sherberghan and Meymaneh in the west. While government and security officials at all levels in Badakhshan have been quite supportive of USAID's project, the LBG engineers are especially impressed by the readiness of farmers along the route to give up a significant part of their extremely limited mountainside acreage for the sake of the road. Although GIRoA is supposed to pay compensation, project managers doubt this is actually happening. The company maintains two community development offices to work as liaisons with local residents and has tried to be

accommodating, for example by allowing time for harvesting of targeted fields and by rerouting of affected irrigation channels. They marvel nonetheless at the goodwill they have encountered despite the destruction of 400-500 houses, many of which have been dismantled by the residents themselves.

¶19. (U) The on-site project managers point to one other important advantage they enjoy) good security. They had some IEDs and rockets to deal with last year, but things are going well now. Without good security, they say, it would be impossible to build the road through the area's mountainous terrain where they and their crews are often dwarfed by still higher ground above them. The NDS licenses their protection teams, who are made up basically of the troops of local commanders. Another advantage of good security is their ability to find willing Afghan subcontractors. Some of these firms once worked in the southeast and reinvested their earnings in the purchase of expensive road construction equipment. Those Afghan businessmen are reluctant to work again in those now more insecure areas for fear of losing their equipment to insurgent attack.

Eikenberry

Viewing cable 09KABUL1651, 06/23/09 MEETING, ASSISTANT AMB MUSSOMELI AND MOI

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL1651	2009-06-24 11:11	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

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INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KABUL 001651

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SRAP, SCA/A, INL, EUR/RPM

STATE PASS TO NSC FOR WOOD

OSD FOR FLOURNOY

CENTCOM FOR CG CJTF-82, POLAD, JICENT

KABUL FOR COS USFOR-A

EO 12958 DECL: 06/23/2019

TAGS PREL, PGOV, MARR, MASS, AF

SUBJECT: 06/23/09 MEETING, ASSISTANT AMB MUSSOMELI AND MOI

MINISTER ATMAR: KUNDUZ DYNCORP PROBLEM, TRANSPORT FOR PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES AND OTHER TOPICS

REF: KABUL 1480

Classified By: POLMIL COUNSELOR ROBERT CLARKE FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Assistant Ambassador Mussomeli discussed a range of issues with Minister of Interior (MoI) Hanif Atmar on June 23. On the Kunduz Regional Training Center (RTC) DynCorp event of April 11 (reftel), Atmar reiterated his insistence that the U.S. try to quash any news article on the incident or circulation of a video connected with it. He continued to predict that publicity would "endanger lives." He disclosed that he has arrested two Afghan police and nine other Afghans as part of an MoI investigation into Afghans who facilitated this crime of "purchasing a service from a child." He pressed for CSTC-A to be given full control over the police training program, including contractors. Mussomeli counseled that an overreaction by the Afghan government (GIROA) would only increase chances for the greater publicity the MoI is trying to forestall.

¶2. (C) On armored vehicles and air transport for presidential candidates, Atmar pitched strongly to have the GIROA decide which candidates were under

threat and to retain control of allocation of these assets. He agreed with the principle of a level playing field for candidates but argued that "direct support by foreigners" demonstrated a lack of confidence in GIROA. If GIROA failed to be fair, international assets and plans in reserve could be used. On another elections-related issue, Atmar claimed that two Helmand would-be provincial candidates (and key Karzai supporters) disqualified under DIAG rules had actually possessed weapons as part of a GIROA contract to provide security for contractors.

¶3. (C) Atmar also was enthusiastic about working out arrangements with the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) in RC-South to partner with the Afghan Border Police (ABP) on training and joint operations to extend GIROA governance south. He is considering giving BG Melham, a highly regarded Afghan officer, responsibility for ABP in Nimruz and Helmand provinces. END SUMMARY.

KUNDUZ RTC DYNCORP UPDATE

¶4. (C) On June 23, Assistant Ambassador Mussomeli met with MOI Minister Hanif Atmar on a number of issues, beginning with the April 11 Kunduz RTC DynCorp investigation. Amb Mussomeli opened that the incident deeply upset us and we took strong steps in response. An investigation is on-going, disciplinary actions were taken against DynCorp leaders in Afghanistan, we are also aware of proposals for new procedures, such as stationing a military officer at RTCs, that have been introduced for consideration. (Note: Placing military officers to oversee contractor operations at RTCs is not legally possible under the current DynCorp contract.) Beyond remedial actions taken, we still hope the matter will not be blown out of proportion, an outcome which would not be good for either the U.S. or Afghanistan. A widely-anticipated newspaper article on the Kunduz scandal has not appeared but, if there is too much noise that may prompt the journalist to publish.

¶5. (C) Atmar said he insisted the journalist be told that publication would endanger lives. His request was that the U.S. quash the article and release of the video. Amb Mussomeli responded that going to the journalist would give her the sense that there is a more terrible story to report. Atmar then disclosed the arrest of two Afghan National Police (ANP) and nine other Afghans (including RTC language assistants) as part of an MoI investigation into Afghan "facilitators" of the event. The crime he was pursuing was "purchasing a service from a child," which in Afghanistan is illegal under both Sharia law and the civil code, and against the ANP Code of Conduct for police officers who might be involved. He said he would use the civil code and that, in this case, the institution of the ANP will be protected, but he worried about the image of foreign mentors. Atmar said that President Karzai had told him that his (Atmar's) "prestige" was in play in management of the Kunduz DynCorp matter and another recent event in which Blackwater contractors mistakenly killed several Afghan citizens. The President had asked him "Where is the justice?"

¶6. (C) Atmar said there was a larger issue to consider. He

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understood that within DynCorp there were many "wonderful" people working hard, and he was keen to see proper action taken to protect them; but, these contractor companies do not have many friends. He was aware that many questions about them go to SRAP Holbrooke and, in Afghanistan, there is increasing public skepticism about contractors. On the other hand, the conduct of the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) is disciplined. Looking at these facts, he said, he wanted CSTC-A in charge. He wanted the ANP to become a model security institution just like the Afghan National Army (ANA) and National Directorate for Security (NDS), and the contractors were not producing what was desired. He suggested that the U.S. establish an independent commission to review the mentor situation, an idea he said Ambassador Eikenberry had first raised. Atmar added that he also wanted tighter control over Afghan employees. He was convinced that the Kunduz incident, and other events where mentors had obtained drugs, could not have happened without Afghan participation.

ARMORED VEHICLES (AND AIR TRANSPORT) FOR PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

¶7. (C) Atmar expressed strong opinions about the use of armored vehicles for travel by presidential candidates that he has requested be provided to MoI by the U.S. and UK. He said it was up to MoI to decide whether a candidate was under threat or not. Atmar opined that it should be an MoD responsibility to provide air transport for presidential candidates. Amb Mussomeli explained that we want a level playing field, which Atmar agreed was necessary. However, Atmar said there were two important considerations: 1) some of the electorate will view that the candidates are controlled by foreigners if provided non-GIRoA transport; and 2) bypassing the MoI or MoD with "direct support by foreigners" demonstrated a lack of confidence in the Afghanistan government. When Amb Mussomeli said MOD lacked adequate aircraft to cover all candidates, Atmar responded that MoD could ask ISAF for help but should retain control of the travel. Amb Mussomeli pointed out that some reasonably worried that such a plan will falter or will not be fairly implemented. Atmar answered "Just give us a chance. If we fail, then you have your own planes and plans in reserve."

DIAG-DISQUALIFIED CANDIDATES IN HELMAND

¶8. (C) In a discussion on two would-be provincial election candidates in Helmand who were disqualified by the Disbandment of Illegally Armed Groups (DIAG) program, Atmar said he had looked into requests to stand firm against their reinstatement, but it was a "big, contentious issue that is not explainable to President Karzai." Atmar said that the only reason these two candidates were barred was for having weapons, apparently against DIAG rules. In fact, he said, they were "contracted by the state" to have those weapons in order to provide security for contractors. He acknowledged that the "contract" had not been properly registered, and suggested that the GIRoA would take care of the registration.

AFGHAN BORDER POLICE (ABP) AND PARTNERING WITH THE MARINES IN RC-SOUTH

¶9. (C) Atmar enthusiastically proposed an MOI meeting with the leadership of the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) and CSTC-A to work out arrangements for good partnering, training, and joint operations with Afghan security forces in RC-South. The MEB would like two ABP companies (approximately 250 police) currently located near Lashkar Gah to move south, and to be mobile enough to move further south when opportunities arise. The MEB would like a customs officer to be attached to these ABP companies so that the reach of GIROA governance can be extended when insurgent-controlled or dominated territory is opened. Atmar stopped short of making a final promise to give a highly-regarded Afghan officer, BG Melham (whom he personally respects), responsibility for the ABP in Nimruz and Helmand provinces, but he was aware of concerns about the current responsible officer (BG Noorzai).

KABUL INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL (ISK)

¶10. (U) Amb Mussomeli expressed concern over a plan by a District Police Chief to remove security barriers at ISK (an primary and secondary school partially dependent on USAID and other Mission funding support) that keep the road closed to

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normal traffic. Removing the barriers could endanger the kids and teachers who walk between two compounds. Atmar said that he was very familiar with ISK and "no barriers would be touched," although he added that perhaps an arrangement could be made to unblock the road and have the ISK security personnel search vehicles.

EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 09KABUL1677, HELMAND GOVERNOR MANGAL UPBEAT, HOPEFUL IN MEETING

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL1677	2009-06-27 11:11	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO0594

OO RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

DE RUEHBUL #1677/01 1781146

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O 271146Z JUN 09

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9733

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 001677

NOFORN

SIPDIS

STATE FOR S/RAP HOLBROOKE, SCA/FO, SCA/A

STATE PASS USAID

EO 12958 DECL: 06/16/2019

TAGS PGOV, PREL, AF

SUBJECT: HELMAND GOVERNOR MANGAL UPBEAT, HOPEFUL IN MEETING

WITH AMBASSADOR

Classified By: Ambassador Karl W. Eikenberry for reasons 1.4 (b) and (c)

¶1. (U) Helmand Governor Gulabuddin Mangal was upbeat, yet realistic during a June 16 call on Ambassador Eikenberry at the U.S. Embassy. The Ambassador gave Mangal a set of photos taken during last month's grand opening of the Best Commercial Airfield in Helmand. Mangal thanked the Ambassador and promised to share the photos with Helmand leaders. Mangal said many Helmandi leaders had sent messages of support for the Ambassador's speech, and that local media had rebroadcast the speech several times. The Ambassador was encouraged by this news, telling Mangal that he wrote the speech himself based on both his knowledge of the new U.S. strategy in Afghanistan and his desire to bolster the confidence of Helmand's residents in the United States and the international community.

¶2. (SBU) Mangal offered a brief overview of the security situation in Helmand since he was appointed in early 2008, describing security throughout the province as bad, and pointing specifically to the complete lack of security in provincial capital Lashkar Gah. He said fear among Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), both the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP), led them to fire shots randomly in the streets. He added there was a complete lack of coordination with coalition forces. Mangal said narcotics traffickers operating with impunity lived within 100 meters of the police station in the capital. Mangal's arrest of these characters was met with strong resistance from the local Chief of Police and National Directorate of Security (NDS) chief, who had warned him that taking

on drug traffickers was too dangerous. Mangal said he proceeded anyway, because he "knew that they were not stronger than the law." Mangal admitted that the crackdown on narcotics traffickers in the city had created problems, and that his effectiveness as governor has suffered because of it. Nevertheless, he said he would never give up on maintaining security - and by extension - prosperity, in Helmand. Mangal also said coordination between ANSF and NATO forces had improved greatly under his watch. He reported a good relationship with RC-South Deputy Commanding General Nicholson, and said he senses commitment from the United States to continuing coordination against drug trafficking. Mangal thanked the United States for its continuing counter narcotics support.

¶3. (SBU) Mangal spoke of the success of the Food Zone Program, which he hopes will be renewed for a second year. He reported he has achieved buy-in from many community leaders, including the line minister of health, tribal elders, and religious leaders, who issued a fatwah reminding Helmandis that drugs are prohibited in Islam. He also touted his public awareness campaign, which has included posters telling youth of the dangers of drugs, and informing farmers of alternative livelihood options. Mangal assured the Ambassador that poppy production would fall to zero this year.

¶4. (C/NF) Mangal reminded the Ambassador that five districts in Helmand are currently under control of enemy forces. He expressed hope that those would soon be under GIRoA control, with help from the incoming Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB). He recalled successful Marine operations in Garmsir last year, which is now a secure district, and said elders at Bost were very complimentary about the U.S. efforts. However, when the Ambassador asked him to assess the British, Mangal said people are not optimistic. Mangal stressed he admires British sacrifices and what they have done, but that the public is not happy because of unfulfilled goals. Mangal said Sangin district looks like a "military compound" due to the high number of UK troops, and opined this should not be necessary to maintain security there. He also complained that the UK has done nothing to advance reconstruction goals in the province. He qualified these observations by saying that he admires the new techniques of British special forces and hoped they would "change everything" by continuing to fight narcotics traffickers.

¶5. (C) Referring to the successful counter narcotics operation at Marja last month, Mangal told the Ambassador that some people had misinformed President Karzai. (Note: Mangal was referring to tribal leaders who reportedly misinformed Karzai that the operation had resulted in civilian casualties, rather than supporting the success of the operation. End note). Mangal proudly said he told

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Karzai directly that the operation had targeted enemies and accomplished a major success. He also said civilian casualties had, in fact occurred, but not as many as Karzai's friends reported. Mangal said Karzai's friends - of which there are many in Helmand, Kandahar and Urugzan - often tell him the "wrong things."

¶6. (C) Mangal at first deflected the Ambassador's inquiry on the status of his relationship with Karzai, saying only that "I am working hard at doing my job." He added that Karzai had attempted to replace him with Sher Mohammed Akhunzada, a known warlord and criminal, only three months after Mangal's appointment last year. Mangal described a discussion he had with Karzai at the time, in which he said to Karzai "If you trust me, you must give me three more months to prove myself." Karzai, according to Mangal, backed down, telling Mangal his anger was really directed at British Forces. Mangal opined that Karzai remains jealous of his good relationship with ISAF and coalition forces, but recognizes that Mangal is the best pick to make progress in Helmand. Mangal admitted that his relationship with Karzai has suffered since he was governor of Laghman. The Ambassador said the fact that Karzai assigned Mangal to such an important province was a signal of confidence and trust, but recognized that tensions would always exist due to Karzai's personal connections. The Ambassador said he can see Mangal's strong relationship with leaders in Helmand and reaffirmed that British confidence in Mangal is very high. He also reassured Mangal that United States sees him as a superb governor in a dangerous role, who is both wise and brave. He said Afghans and the international community alike see Mangal among the rising generation of leaders in a new Afghanistan.

¶7. (SBU) The Ambassador told Mangal that new ISAF Commander, General Stanley McChrystal, is a long-time professional colleague and personal friend, and promised to brief General McChrystal on the history of Helmand before his first visit. For the U.S. and UK, Helmand is one of the top two or three provinces for our strategy in the next year, which is reflected in the deployment of our Marines there. The Ambassador said in his new civilian role, he would increase the focus on reconstruction, governance and development, including programs that increase capacity and reduce unemployment. He stressed that in order to combat unemployment, we will work hard on agricultural productivity and programs that help farmers bring those products to market road development. Small scale irrigation systems will also be emphasized. At the same time, we will take all measures we can to reinforce programs to establish better governance and to increase communication with Karzai. The Ambassador encouraged Mangal not to lose faith. He invited Mangal to stop by any time he is in Kabul, and said on his next visit to Helmand, they would walk through the bazaar together. Mangal thanked the Ambassador for his kind words and vowed to keep pushing forward change in Helmand.

EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 09KABUL1767, KARZAI ON THE STATE OF US-AFGHAN RELATIONS

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL1767	2009-07-07 13:01	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO6511

OO RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0009

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 KABUL 001767

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/03/2019

TAGS: PGOV PREL AF

SUBJECT: KARZAI ON THE STATE OF US-AFGHAN RELATIONS

Classified By: Ambassador Karl W. Eikenberry for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (S/NF) SUMMARY. In a series of meetings this week, I discussed with President Karzai a number of issues, including Karzai's concerns with the future of US policy on Afghanistan, and his opinions on where US policy here had failed. The meetings were cordial, but raised certain concerns for me about the status of the US-Afghan relationship, both in the lead up to the election and over the long term, should Karzai win reelection. Karzai's comments reinforce my belief that our relationship must be a two-way partnership of obligations and responsibilities. We must also convince Karzai to put his backing behind democratic institutions and professionalized security forces are better equipped to lead Afghanistan into the future, rather than Karzai's preference for tribal structures and informal power networks. This cable summarizes the content

of these four recent meetings, as well as a subsequent conversation with Interior Minister Atmar. End Summary.

¶2. (S/NF) I met with Karzai on four occasions this week: on June 30 with COMISAF Gen. McChrystal and most of Karzai's national security team, and three times on July 1, xxxxxxxxxxxx, and finally with CODEL Ellsworth. Karzai maintained a calm demeanor throughout, but at several times displayed views that troubled me with their potential implications for US-Afghan relations. I also called on Atmar on July 2.

Kandahar Incident

¶3. (S/NF) At the June 30 meeting with Karzai and his national security advisors, Gen. McChrystal and I briefed Karzai on a June 29 incident in which a USG-funded, equipped, and mentored paramilitary force attacked a Kandahar courthouse. The incident resulted in the deaths of several Afghan National Police officers. Karzai had earlier received phone calls from high-level US officials regretting the incident, so was calm and did not display the type of emotive anger he has shown following civilian casualty incidents. In the later one-on-one meeting with me, I reminded Karzai that he had selected and introduced this paramilitary unit's recruits to the USG in 2002, a fact that he had conveniently omitted in larger group settings.

¶4. (S/NF) Karzai insisted that units operating outside of the Afghan armed forces must be brought under the legitimate control of the Afghan government. Gen. McChrystal and I agreed that both counterterrorism paramilitary units and private security companies (PSCs) require more rigorous oversight and be brought under the eventual control of the

Afghan government. PSCs required stronger regulations, yet the government should also adopt more transparent licensing procedures.

US Policy on Afghanistan

¶5. (S/NF) Karzai declared in all four meetings that he believed the US was not speaking clearly to Afghans on its goals in Afghanistan. Karzai contended that in 2002 the US had stated a clear purpose for being involved in Afghanistan but had lost its purpose over the past six years. As he has in past meetings with us, Karzai either stated his belief in or repeated rumors questioning the US commitment to a strong partnership with Afghanistan.

¶6. (S/NF) Karzai reported Pakistani intelligence officials had alleged to Afghan officials that the US intended to divide Pakistan and weaken Afghanistan in order to pursue its fight against terrorist groups. At the same time, Karzai accused Iran of trying to weaken Afghanistan by supporting the presidential campaign of Abdullah Abdullah in order to promote a decentralization agenda that would strip power from the central government to give to sub-national actors over whom Iran believed it would have more control. Incredulously, Karzai appeared to accept so-called rumors that the US and Iran were working together to support Abdullah against him.

¶7. (S/NF) I pushed back strongly on this misinformation in the June 30 meeting with Karzai's national security team, reiterating to Karzai that there was no overt or covert US program to support any presidential candidate. I then asked Karzai if he took me at my word on this issue. Karzai,

perhaps not wanting to back down in front of his advisors, said that he did not. Karzai said the US had actively encouraged Abdullah, Ashraf Ghani, and Zalmay Khalilzad to run for the presidency. At one point Karzai joked that I should "consult my (above) buddies" on national security issues. I repeated that the US had no favored candidates in

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the race and the formal setting of the meeting was not a proper forum to make such inappropriate comments. He was embarrassed and helpfully shifted the conversation to another topic. I also urged Karzai to move away from conspiratorial thinking and instead focus on bringing ideas for the future into his campaign. Introducing a clear platform now will put him in a better position to move forward if he wins reelection.

US Mistakes in Afghanistan

¶8. (S/NF) Karzai and I held a one-on-one meeting shortly before meeting CODEL Ellsworth. Karzai agreed with my suggestion to make a better effort to present the case for continued and productive US engagement in his meetings with USG visitors from Washington. However, as the CODEL meeting began, Karzai reverted to old form and launched into a familiar review of the many instances where he believed the US had miscalculated its policies in the region. In summary: The US had failed to formulate an effective post-2001 policy on Pakistan, had pulled out of southern Afghanistan (particularly Helmand) too soon and given too much responsibility to ill-equipped and casualty-averse NATO

allies, had failed to effectively engage with and pay respect to the importance of tribal leaders in Afghan society, and had allowed tribal leader networks to be decimated by insurgent attacks. I spoke up then, observing that I had visited Helmand several years ago before other NATO forces took over military operations there and witnessed signs that governance and security were declining under then-Gov. Sher Mohammed Akhundzada.

Atmar on Karzai's Paranoia

¶9. (S/NF) I told Interior Minister Atmar at our July 2 meeting that with his conspiratorial behavior, Karzai would run the risk of leaving USG interlocutors with the impression that we have accomplished very little here and that the Afghan government believed most of the failures lay with us. This is not a dialogue that will lead to an effective partnership. The US has been clear in its past shortcomings in Afghanistan, but we have yet to see Karzai admit to the serious shortcomings in his administration.

¶10. (S/NF) Atmar agreed with the importance of Karzai presenting himself as a better international partner. He also detailed three existing paranoias that affected Karzai's worldview: (1) Karzai did not understand US policy in the region and suspected ulterior motives in our relationship with neighboring countries; (2) he suspected the US was contemplating a short-term strategy in Afghanistan that would result in our disengagement within the next two years; and (3) the US was intent on dumping Karzai and supporting another candidate. A fourth emerging paranoia was of a US plot to divide and weaken Pashtuns on both sides of the Afghan-Pakistani border. Despite these paranoias, Atmar

assured me that Karzai had confidence in his personal relationship with me and recognized the need to meet more frequently to work through his misperceptions of US policy and intentions.

Our Relationship with Karzai

¶11. (S/NF) In these meetings and other recent encounters with Karzai, two contrasting portraits emerge. The first is of a paranoid and weak individual unfamiliar with the basics of nation building and overly self-conscious that his time in the spotlight of glowing reviews from the international community has passed. The other is that of an ever-shrewd politician who sees himself as a nationalist hero who can save the country from being divided by the decentralization-focused agenda of Abdullah, other political rivals, neighboring countries, and the US. In order to recalibrate our relationship with Karzai, we must deal with and challenge both of these personalities.

¶12. (S/NF) The danger of long-term damage to our relationship with and thus our influence over Karzai) who for now is the clear favorite to win the election) is real, but not irreversible. We need to carefully ensure that the distance between us and Karzai does not grow over the remaining weeks before the election. Karzai has invited me for a series of one-on-one meetings in the near future. According to Atmar, Karzai recognizes the importance of a closer dialogue. I will use this opportunity and others to re-focus our dialogue on several points that can improve our mutual understanding, including:

¶13. (S/NF) We need to seriously examine the issue of armed

groups that currently operate outside of the purview of

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official Afghan government control. The activities of paramilitary units and PSCs, combined with civilian casualties, night searches, and others issues related to the presence of foreign forces, play into the manifestation of Afghans' anger that they are not in control of their own country. Karzai claims only to be a vessel for his peoples' anger. All hubris aside, he is expressing a legitimate concern of his constituents. These problems will be a barrier to moving forward in other areas of our relationship until we have properly addressed them.

¶14. (S/NF) At the same time, we must convince Karzai that the US-Afghan relationship is a two-way street of obligations and responsibilities. While we accept our own responsibilities, Karzai must accept and act on our expectation that he elucidate a clear vision for how he intends to lead Afghanistan over the next five years in a way that encourages democratization, promotes economic development, and recognizes the poisonous effects corruption has had on his government's ability to win the trust and respect of its people. If reelected, it is my hope that a Karzai who no longer needs to run for reelection will be better positioned and in a healthier frame of mind to pursue this agenda, as well as a meaningful national reconciliation.

¶15. (S/NF) I will work now to lay the foundation for improved trust and advances on the two key themes outlined above. I will work in tandem with Gen. McChrystal on both of these fronts. On the discussion of shared responsibilities,

I will begin a frank, collaborative (and perhaps, at times, confrontational) dialogue with Karzai. No alternative approach is now evident. Karzai's current vision for Afghanistan's future relies too strongly on warlords, tribal chiefs, and other personalities of the past who would be difficult to reconcile with our commitments to build strong government institutions and professional security forces.

Eikenberry

Viewing cable 09KABUL1874, KARZAI'S JULY 12 ELECTION MEETING

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL1874	2009-07-15 04:04	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO7488
OO RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL
DE RUEHBUL #1874/01 1960453
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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0160
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 KABUL 001874

SIPDIS

COS USFOR-A
DEPARTMENT FOR SRAP, SCA/FO, SCA/A. EUR/RPM
STATE PASS TO AID FOR ASIA/SCAA
USFOR-A FOR POLAD

EO 12958 DECL: 7/16/2019

TAGS KDEM, PGOV, PREL, AF

SUBJECT: KARZAI'S JULY 12 ELECTION MEETING

Classified By: Ambassador Carney by reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY and COMMENT. President Karzai's 12 July weekly meeting on election security produced the unwelcome news that polling center numbers must be reduced due to poor security and isolation. The DSRSG noted Khost officials have decided to co-locate 50 polling centers with the remaining 125 in the province. Ambassador Eikenberry concluded discussion by noting the urgency of getting the facts in all provinces by completing the assessment the President has called for. The President decided that Afghan government funds, 1.5M USD would be used to fund efforts to use community leaders to effect electoral security as appropriate. Minister Atmar described a decision to use USAID funding to help recruit women voter searchers. COMMENT: In fact the money will come from UNDP-ELECT that has received major funding from USAID. END COMMENT. Some discussion centered on the need to ensure rapid installation of local governance in Helmand districts freed by on-going operations. The President questioned the Defense Minister about the lack of "an Afghan face" in those operations. END SUMMARY AND COMMENT.

¶2. (U) On 12 July President Karzai's weekly election security meeting included his Foreign, Interior, and Defense Ministers; NDS Intelligence Chief, Vice-Chairman of the Disarmament Process (DIAG), Chairman of the Independent Electoral Commission, NSC advisor and Director-General of the Office of Administrative Affairs and Council of Ministers Secretariat. Of foreigners, the DSRSG, COMISAF, Ambs. Eikenberry Ricciardone, Carney and RAO Chief attended.

¶3. (SBU) Discussion heavily centered on the agenda item calling for security assessment of the nearly 7,000 polling centers. The Defense Minister noted that instructions have gone out for the range of relevant Afghan and ISAF authorities to reconnoiter sites and prepare a detailed plan to secure them, a plan based in realities of terrain and on the level of threat. Minister Wardak described the 11 July Election Security Rehearsal as "a positive step toward proper preparation for election." He noted the need for another week's time to complete reconnaissance and preparation of a detailed plan for securing the polling center sites. The President pushed, wondering how many sites have received assessment team visits so far. The Interior Minister replied that of the 6,966 centers, 400 sites have been visited so far. He noted that mainly the police alone, (sometimes with the ANA) had done the trips. Nor had they made any security plans for the sites as yet. He would issue instructions to add such planning, not merely to visit. NDS Chief Saleh said that he has received the full list of centers from the IEC and would have a report of sites visited for next Sunday's meeting. IEC Chairman Lodin gave a report that noted dispatch of up to 90% of (non-sensitive) electoral materiel without incident. He spoke vaguely about some non-Taliban Afghan "troublemakers." He cited problems in Herat, in two districts, and scored "high level officers" as "saying

things that benefit the Taliban.â€

¶4. (SBU) DSRSG Galbraith cast doubt on the possibility of using, much less securing, all of the polling centers. He had just visited Khost where, he noted, in response to the Defense Minister's questioning of his sources, local electoral and government officials had said they must co-locate 50 of the more remote polling centers together with the remaining 125 centers in the province. Galbraith expressed the suspicion that from one quarter to one third of polling centers in other provinces of insurgent presence would probably need the same treatment. The President doubted if the local population would be willing to go to the relocated polling centers. The DSRSG explained that such centers would be relocated to market town where people normally go to shop, not as close, but along routes the people know. He added that turnout would likely be reduced, but not so much as if 50 centers would be unable to open at all. After a comment on the need for recruiting women to do security searches of voters (below), the DSRSG concluded by observing the very short period left in which to recruit and train all polling workers.

¶5. (U) Ambassador Eikenberry noted the need to complete the surveying of all the polling centers in order to establish the facts and develop plans. Professor Lodin recalled the experience of voter registration in which people moved and shifted to other populated areas to get their cards.

¶6. (U) The need for women security checkers has apparently been resolved. Professor Lodin said that a total of 28,000 male and female searchers are needed for 7,000 polling centers. The IEC and the Interior Ministry are in discussion about this need and funds must be found that USAID can provide. Ambassador Eikenberry recalled that USAID moneys may not go through the Ministry of Interior as a matter of policy. He suggested that the Ministry of Finance can put funds into the Interior Ministry as it will receive a budget augmentation from forthcoming U.S. funds. Minister Atmar explained that an 11 July meeting of IEC, USAID and others had decided that the IEC would employ women workers and MOI would train them in search techniques. In this context he noted a decision to give women provincial council candidates one bodyguard each. He stated that, on the President's instruction from the previous meeting, twenty IEC-identified warehouses would be subject of a "decision" for security that he did not explain.

¶7. (SBU) The Interior Minister also raised his earlier remarks about a "controversial map" that questioned assumptions about safe areas. He contended that, rather than relocate polling centers and thereby risking to disenfranchise voters, he proposed to:

- a) deploy forces to secure priority (not all) districts;
- b) Organize community leaders. Something that can work is the U.S. is willing to help with financing. Without such U.S. resources,

MOI would do what it could. President Karzai interjected that Atmar should take "our resources," that he understood \$1.5M would be necessary and do it. The Finance Ministry would reimburse MOI. MOI, NDS, IDLG and others would "put it into action," and let the President know if more resources are needed. He cut short the contention of Minister Stanekzai that up to \$3.0M might be needed, ending the discussion by reaffirming the figure of \$1.5M.

¶8. (C) Continuing on the issue of contacting the local community for election security assistance, the President accepted COMISAF's offer of Special Forces help. He recalled that local community leaders had been important in ensuring that voter registration went well. Prof. Lodin noted that local leaders have enabled mobile registration teams to venture out up to 60 KM from province centers where the police normally restrict travel to 20 Km from the centers.

¶9. (SBU) Other electoral needs came under discussion with Minister Atmar noting exchanges at the 11 July election security rehearsal that put IEC need for helicopters to move sensitive ballot materials after the vote at one per province at least. He believed that security sector helicopters would likely be busy. He mooted the possibility that the UN might augment its existing contract with short-term helicopter rental with donor support. Ambassador Eikenberry again noted that the key is to identify the requirement and then to analyze capacity and discuss how to make up any shortfall. The DSRSG agreed, undertaking to look into the possibility of short-term helicopter rentals at this late date in the process.

¶10. (C) The President turned to the military situation in Helmand province, noting that the Afghan army is not visible and questioning the Defense Minister's contention that the army is fully deployed around the country with only a limited number of troops available to join in the operation with the U.S. Marines. "People see the lack of an Afghan face," noted the President who observed that the Minister's suggestion that he might add another battalion as an "insignificant" 600 men. He urged the Minister to try finding more forces to deploy in Helmand.

¶11. (SBU) Further discussion on Helmand included the DSRSG's observation that the flow of internally displaced is less than initially feared. He added the need to ensure assignment and appointment of local governance officials as districts are cleared, underscoring the importance of delivering government services rapidly. All districts liberated in ongoing operations are having district leaders appointed, according to both Ministers Atmar and Wardak.

¶12. (C) In other developments NDS Chief Saleh stated that the Pakistan Army has said they are ready to mediate between Mullah Omar and the U.S. Amb. Eikenberry said that the U.S. has reaffirmed to Pakistan our policy that reconciliation is led through the government of

Afghanistan.

¶13. (SBU) COMISAF noted that ISAF forces had entered the embattled district of Barg-e Metal (Pakistan border, northernmost district in Nuristan) earlier in the morning without fighting. What had happened was not yet clear.

¶14. (U) President Karzai noted an agenda for the 19 July meeting would be out by Thursday, 16 July.

EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 09KABUL1892, KARZAI DIALOGUE ON U.S.-AFGHAN RELATIONS CONTINUES

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL1892	2009-07-16 03:03	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET//NOFORN	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO8567

PP RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

DE RUEHBUL #1892/01 1970345

ZNY SSSSS ZZH

P 160345Z JUL 09

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0190

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 KABUL 001892

NOFORN

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/13/2019

TAGS: PGOV PREL AF

SUBJECT: KARZAI DIALOGUE ON U.S.-AFGHAN RELATIONS CONTINUES

REF: KABUL 1767

Classified By: Ambassador Karl W. Eikenberry for Reasons 1:4 b,d

¶1. (S/NF) SUMMARY. President Karzai and I continued our dialogue on the future of U.S.-Afghan relations (reftel) in our weekly meeting, July 7. We were joined by National Security Advisor Rassoul. Karzai discussed his priorities for the next five years as outlined in his draft election manifesto. The President's manner was significantly more relaxed and warm than in meetings the previous week when he was often agitated, accusing the U.S. of working against him (reftel). As a result, our discussion was more constructive and forward-looking. When Karzai drifted towards a reiteration of his anti-U.S. conspiracy theories on several occasions, I was able to refocus the conversation on how the U.S. and Afghanistan governments can work together in the near and medium term to achieve combined success.

REVIEWING KARZAI'S ELECTION MANIFESTO FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS

¶2. (S/NF) As we discussed the long-term goals outlined in Karzai's draft election manifesto, I reiterated the U.S. commitment to continuing our close partnership with Afghanistan, regardless of whom the Afghan people elect in August. I then outlined what the U.S. was seeking from the relationship over the next five years and commented on some points in Karzai's proposed agenda. Under President Obama's strategy for Afghanistan, I noted, we would continue to pursue a more coherent regional approach, while assisting the Afghan government build a more secure and economically sustainable country that would never again permit sanctuary for international terrorism. I emphasized the importance of

achieving meaningful progress in the near term to prove to the U.S. and the international community that our ongoing investment of lives and resources in Afghanistan was producing tangible, lasting results for the Afghan people.

¶3. (S/NF) I took issue with the foreign policy section of Karzai's draft manifesto which stressed Afghanistan's relations with the Islamic world and with Palestine, followed by a rather weak comment on relations with the U.S. I pointed out this did not accurately reflect our robust partnership and raises questions regarding Karzai's perspective on the bilateral relationship.

¶4. (S/NF) I also noted the document's lack of a strong emphasis on strengthening Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and judicial system. Five years down the road, I said, success would be defined by whether the ANSF's increased capacity allowed it to take the lead in planning and conducting effective military operations, as well as apprehending and detaining insurgents under Afghan legal authority. (NOTE: We are seeking a translation of the draft of Karzai's manifesto passed to us earlier this month and will transmit septel once translation is complete.)

¶5. (S/NF) Karzai then mentioned that after the election he planned to call a national jirga to make a recommitment to the Afghanistan-U.S. relationship and our partnership in the war against terror. This would, he claimed, clarify the military assistance aspect of the relationship and counter what many Afghan's perceive to be the "unfocused presence" of international forces, reducing public concerns about those forces. (Note: We have since learned that a later draft of Karzai's manifesto may include this call for a traditional loya jirga to address the presence of U.S. forces in

Afghanistan. If true that Karzai intends to convene a traditional loya jirga instead of a constitutional loya jirga, it would reflect a disappointing continuation of Karzai's tendency to govern through reliance on personalities of the past, rather than on democratic institutions.)

AMBASSADOR: FOCUS SHOULD BE ON AFGHAN GOVT WINNING HEARTS AND MINDS

¶6. (S/NF) Karzai then returned to a familiar theme, his wish for Afghan-U.S. relations to recover the spirit of 2002-04 - a period Karzai sees as a "golden age" in the relationship. He would like for U.S. forces to again be able to drive their humvees through villages, greeted warmly by villagers who would shout, "Good morning, Sergeant Thompson." Karzai claimed, as he has many times, that his concern over the erosion of public trust in the U.S. was a driving factor in his increasingly strident criticism regarding civilian casualties, night raids and detentions.

¶7. (S/NF) I reminded Karzai that we had agreed our discussion would be forward-looking, rather than dwell on past grievances. I also reminded him the U.S. and ISAF had made a

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tremendous effort over the past year to avoid civilian casualties, noting that in a recent engagement in Helmand where one U.S. marine had been killed and 25 wounded, we had not employed close air support or artillery. Karzai agreed there had been a dramatic reduction in civilian casualty incidents, saying he intended to make a public statement noting his gratitude for U.S. efforts. I welcomed such a

statement, observing that the U.S. continues to bear a heavy cost for our assistance to Afghanistan in the American lives lost as we work to ensure a more secure future here.

¶8. (S/NF) I also took issue with Karzai's "golden age" perspective, reminding him that I had been in Afghanistan during this period. It was clear, even at that time, that trouble was brewing as the focus on security and reconstruction drifted and declined due to lack of resources and a comprehensive strategy. I urged Karzai to recognize that President Obama is providing the U.S.-Afghan partnership with the tools necessary to build a lasting foundation for Afghanistan's success, based on sustainable security, accountable government, and a working economy. I stressed to Karzai that our primary goal in Afghanistan is not to win public support for the U.S., but rather to help the Afghan government win its own people's hearts and minds by enabling it to provide basic security and effective governance to the people. In five years, we expect to still have forces in Afghanistan, but with the majority as advisors and trainers in support of ANSF in areas such as logistics, air support, intelligence, etc. Returning to Karzai's hopes for the future, I told him Americans do not long for a day in which their soldiers are hailed throughout Afghanistan; they are instead growing impatient for the day a respected Afghan Army and national police force are fully capable of providing security to the Afghan populace. Time is not unlimited.

KARZAI'S ANTI-U.S. RHETORIC UNDERMINES ADVOCACY FOR CONTINUED SUPPORT

¶9. (N/SF) I then raised with Karzai his regular claim to senior U.S. visitors that the U.S. has "failed in

Afghanistan." I noted that such rhetoric could potentially undermine continued bipartisan support for our current strategy of expanding U.S. assistance to Afghanistan. I said some criticism was fair, but in these meetings with senior U.S. officials, Karzai regularly failed to acknowledge any meaningful progress resulting from U.S. contributions. By condemning U.S. efforts while failing to take any responsibility for Afghanistan's problems, Karzai was not presenting the Afghan government (or himself) as a responsible partner in this relationship, a partner cognizant of and sensitive to mutual obligations. Leaving meetings with Karzai, officials could easily conclude that the U.S. has accomplished little or nothing here and question why we continue to devote American lives and resources to the effort. Karzai indicated that he understood the need to present a more balanced perspective. (Note. It remains to be seen whether Karzai can or will refrain from this "blame America" tactic he uses to deflect criticism of his administration. Indeed, his inability to grasp the most rudimentary principles of state-building and his deep seated insecurity as a leader combine to make any admission of fault unlikely, in turn confounding our best efforts to find in Karzai a responsible partner.)

ELECTIONS: KARZAI (STILL) SUSPICIOUS OF U.S. INTENTIONS

¶10. (S/NF) Revisiting a favorite grievance, Karzai asserted that early in the year some officials in the Obama Administration had encouraged potential opposition candidates to run. Karzai indicated he felt Secretary Clinton had been very supportive and noted relations with VP Biden were much improved. He still felt some senior officials were actively working to undermine him. Those officials, he said, were

openly discussing election runoff scenarios that would give the opposition an opening to unite against him. Karzai claimed that in a fair and free election he would win on the first round. If there were "irregularities" and the election went to a second round, Karzai believed opposition candidates would play the "ethnic card" to marshal support, undermining national unity.

¶11. (S/NF) I challenged his assertion that Administration officials had promoted opposition candidates. I emphasized that, in fact, our Mission has gone to great pains to remain balanced in engagement with presidential candidates and to promote a level-playing field, I reminded Karzai that I had decided not to visit Mazar-e-Sharif because of Governor Atta's overt campaigning for Abdullah and his reported refusal to comply with MOI Atmar's dismissal of two policemen in the province for corruption. Karzai replied, with humor,

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that he conceded in this instance that the U.S. had been even-handed in demonstrating its commitment to fair elections.

COMMENT

¶12. (S/NF) Although more relaxed than in recent meetings, Karzai remains deeply suspicious of U.S. intentions and actions regarding key opposition candidates, frequently citing U.S.-based support groups for Abdullah Abdullah and Ashraf Ghani. Karzai is currently most concerned about a potential Abdullah coalition. (He dismissed Ghani, saying that he will know Ghani has admitted defeat when he asks for

a position in Karzai's new government.) Karzai clearly expected (or hoped) to receive the same U.S. support for his candidacy that he received in the 2004 election, and interprets our neutral stance in this election as evidence that the U.S. is "against" him. I will continue to use my weekly dialogues with Karzai to clarify our position on this and other issues, while focusing him on the way forward in U.S.-Afghan relations with an emphasis on our shared desire that progress needs to continue, regardless of who wins the election. In future discussions, I will continue to stress the importance of Afghanistan assuming a more meaningful partnership role, and focus on key issue areas such as ANSF growth and assumption of lead responsibility for security, reconciliation, government accountability, and sustainable development. Through this engagement, we will also seek to avoid the gap between the U.S. and Karzai widening to the point that we will lose precious time closing the distance should he be re-elected.

EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 09KABUL2246, COMPLAINTS TO GIROA ON PRE-TRIAL RELEASES AND

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL2246	2009-08-06 05:05	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXYZ0001

OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBUL #2246 2180528

ZNY SSSSS ZZH

O 060528Z AUG 09 ZDK

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0662

S E C R E T KABUL 002246

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SRAP, SCA/A, INL, EUR/PRM, INR, OSD FOR
FLOURNOY, CENTCOM FOR CG CJTF-82, POLAD, JICENT KABUL FOR
COS USFOR-A

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/01/2019

TAGS: PREL PGOV MARR AF

SUBJECT: COMPLAINTS TO GIROA ON PRE-TRIAL RELEASES AND
PARDONS OF NARCO-TRAFFICKERS

REF: REFTEL KABUL 02245

Classified By: DEPUTY AMBASSADOR FRANCIS J. RICCIARDONE FOR REASONS 1.4
(B) AND (D)

¶1. (S) SUMMARY: On numerous occasions we have emphasized with Attorney General Aloko the need to end interventions by him and President Karzai, who both authorize the release of detainees pre-trial and allow dangerous individuals to go free or re-enter the battlefield without ever facing an Afghan court. On July 29th, Legal Adviser Harold Hongju Koh and Deputy Ambassador Frances Ricciardone demarched Attorney General Muhammad Ishaq Aloko about our concern over pre-trial releases and presidential pardons of narco-traffickers (Reftel Kabul 02245) In Spring 2008, Post had previously demarched National Security Advisor Rassoul about our concern over pre-trial releases. Despite our complaints and expressions of concern to the GIROA, pre-trial releases continue. END SUMMARY

¶2. (S) Transfers from Bagram Theatre Internment Facility (BTIF) to the Afghan National Detention Facility (ANDF) began in Spring 2007. During that year, there was only one pre-trial release. In 2008, there were 104 pre-trial releases, almost all of which took place after President Karzai formed the Aloko Detainee Commission in April 2008. From January to March of 2009, there were 12 pre-trial releases; and 23 pre-trial releases between April and June ¶2009. So far in July 2009, there have been 10 pre-trial releases.

¶3. (S) An August 2005 exchange of diplomatic notes between the USG and the GIROA provides the legal basis for the GIROA,s detention and prosecution of detainees transferred into Afghan custody. Even though a multi-agency GIROA delegation under the Aloko Detainee Commission screens all BTIF detainees who are transferred to the ANDF and assures the USG that these detainees will be prosecuted in an Afghan court, there have been 150 detainees released from the ANDF without trial since 2007, including 29 former Guantanamo Bay (GTMO) detainees. The total number of transfers to date from BTIF to ANDF is 629 detainees, plus 41 from GTMO.

PROTECTION OF NARCOTRAFFICKERS

¶4. (SBU) In April, President Karzai pardoned five border policemen who were caught with 124 kilograms of heroin in their border police vehicle. The policemen, who have come to be known as the Zahir Five,, were tried, convicted and sentenced to terms of 16 to 18 years each at the Central Narcotics Tribunal. But President Karzai pardoned all five of

them on the grounds that they were distantly related to two individuals who had been martyred during the civil war.

¶5. (S) Separately, President Karzai tampered with the narcotics case of Haji Amanullah, whose father is a wealthy businessman and one of his supporters. Without any constitutional authority, Karzai ordered the police to conduct a second investigation which resulted in the conclusion that the defendant had been framed. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX told XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX he was ashamed,, of the president for his interference in this case and the case of the Zahir Five.

¶6. (S) In another case, a CJTF investigation concluded that 26 kilograms of heroin seized from a vehicle search belonged to Col. Jaweed, Chief of the Highway Police for Badakshan Province. Jaweed is the nephew of a powerful member of Parliament. Eventually, he was arrested and is currently serving in Pol-i-Charkhi prison. But, there is credible, but unconfirmed, intelligence indicating that President Karzai has signed a letter pardoning Jaweed that has not yet been delivered to the Supreme Court. Daudzai denied any significant pressure in this case.

¶7. (S) Unconfirmed intelligence also indicates that President Karzai is planning to release drug trafficker Ismal Safed, who is serving a 19-year sentence in Pol-i-Charkhi. Safed is a priority DEA target who was arrested in 2005 in possession of large quantities of heroin and a cache of weapons. In 2008, DEA conducted an operation in which an undercover officer purchased approximately three kilograms of heroin directly from Safed. Daudzai told the Deputy Ambassador that President Karzai will not pardon Safed, and that Post,s concerns about this case will reaffirm President Karzai,s decision not to interfere.

EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 09KABUL2523, S/SRAP HOLBROOKEâ€™S AUG 22 MEETING WITH SRSG KAI

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL2523	2009-08-25 09:09	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO0385

PP RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

DE RUEHBUL #2523 2370926

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

P 250926Z AUG 09 ZDK

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1078

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 002523

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 08/25/2019

TAGS PGOV, PREL, AF

SUBJECT: S/SRAP HOLBROOKEâ€™S AUG 22 MEETING WITH SRSG KAI

EIDE AND DSRSG GALBRAITH ON ELECTION SCENARIO PLANNING

Classified By: Amb. Timothy M. Carney for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary. Ambassadors Holbrooke, Eikenberry, and Ricciardone discussed post-election day scenarios with SRSG Kai Eide, DSRSG Galbraith, and UNDP two days after election day. They agreed that candidates would most likely use rationales of fraud and Pashtun disenfranchisement to discredit the outcome of elections. UNDPâ€™s Margie Cook expressed confidence the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC) could together effectively detect fraud and invalidate ballots where necessary. Participants agreed that the IEC, UN, and international partners should all strive to remain silent when it came to predictions or

probabilities of various outcomes. There was shared concern about the specter of a disgruntled candidate preemptively declaring victory and sparking civil unrest. End Summary.

¶2. (C) On August 22, Ambassadors Eikenberry, Holbrooke, and Ricciardone met with UNAMA SRSG Kai Eide, DSRSG Peter Galbraith, and UNDP Chief Electoral Advisor Margie Cook. The focus of the meeting was scenario planning for the outcome of the election results. Principals exchanged views on the outcomes that were likely in terms of the two key candidates. They noted that the two rationales that would likely be used by the leading candidate camps to challenge the legitimacy of the elections would be fraud and the disenfranchisement of Pashtuns. While there are various accounts of voter turnout in Pashtun areas, the general view is that the numbers were far lower than in the rest of the country.

¶3. (C) S/SRAP Holbrooke, evaluating the prospect of the election being stolen through fraudulent behavior, expressed concern that this would undermine the legitimacy of the government and paralyze it from carrying out the priorities the government urgently needs to address. Ms. Cook noted that fraud had already been detected, including in the Pul-e-Charkhi area of Kabul where ballot boxes had been stuffed days before the elections. UNDP and IEC have already decided to nullify these ballots, she reported. She expected fraud occurred in a number of insecure areas of the country. Ms. Cook reassured the group that there were seven different trigger points in the IEC's tally process to detect fraud and expressed confidence that this process could quarantine and make void fraudulent ballots, even those from insecure areas. She expressed confidence that the ECC would have the will to disqualify a large percentage of votes, even if there would be significant political consequences.

¶4. (C) The principals agreed that it was important not to say anything publicly about the probability of either Hamid Karzai or Abdullah Abdullah securing the 50 plus one percentage of votes necessary for a first round win. There was general concern about one of the campaigns preemptively declaring victory and potentially setting off a chain of disruptive events as witnessed in Iran, Kenya, or Zimbabwe. There was particular concern that one of the candidate's supporters might orchestrate protests and unrest in the major provincial centers. There was concurrence about the importance of stressing to all of the major candidates that they should not make announcements claiming victory until the results were announced by the IEC and that they would respect the process. Ambassador Holbrooke noted that he would stress this point with all three candidates.

¶5. (C) The meeting participants also agreed that it was important to ensure the Chairperson of the IEC not make any predictions about the outcome of the elections until the preliminary results were announced. It was agreed that Ambassador (Ret.) Tim Carney would visit Dr. Ludin to reinforce the point that he should stay on message for the sake of integrity of the process. (Note: Amb. Carney delivered this message on August 24. End Note.) Ms. Cook expressed concern that IEC Chairman Ludin had indicated to the press that he would start providing some details of results elections on August 22 and she

opined it would take at least until August 25 for enough information to be collected to make a correct preliminary partial announcement. The IEC now plans to announce partial preliminary results, perhaps of ten percent of the tally, late afternoon of August 25. EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 09KABUL2658, FM BILDT AGREES ON NEXT STEPS IN AFGHANISTAN

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL2658	2009-09-01 14:02	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

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PP RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

DE RUEHBUL #2658/01 2441452

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

P 011452Z SEP 09

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1284

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 3054

RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM PRIORITY 0304

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 002658

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 08/25/2019

TAGS PGOV, PREL, AF

SUBJECT: FM BILDT AGREES ON NEXT STEPS IN AFGHANISTAN

REF: KABUL 2636

Classified By: PolCouns Annie Pforzheimer for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt agreed, in an August 31 meeting with Ambassador Eikenberry, to a post-election course of action for the international community in Afghanistan. Minister Bildt expressed his

fears over Afghan perceptions of the upcoming conference of Special Representatives for Afghanistan and Pakistan (SRAP) to be held in Paris September 2. We corrected his misperceptions over a reported rift between SRAP Holbrooke and President Karzai. End Summary.

Looking at the Next Five Years

¶2. (C) Looking ahead to the resolution of the presidential election, Ambassador Eikenberry laid out five key steps which we recommend that the international community should observe, as we have, when engaging with both Abdullah and Karzai, but particularly the incumbent:

-- first, both leading candidates should understand we are paying close attention to their conduct in this interim period before the certification of the vote, and that their conduct will impact their relationship with the international community thereafter, whether as President or in another capacity. -- secondly, the next President should understand that we will scrutinize closely his ministerial appointments for competence and commitment to good governance. -- third, the next President's first major policy speeches, including his inauguration speech, will set the tone for his second administration and offer an opportunity to establish a compact with his people. Minister Bildt noted that Karzai might use such a speech to confront the international community. -- fourth, as the President begins his new administration, he must take significant, visible acts to deliver his compact, for example by acting boldly against corruption. -- fifth and finally, if the next President accomplishes the first four steps well, we should accept an invitation from him to a ministerial conference in Kabul, to solidify the relationship between the international community and the new administration and to bolster its legitimacy domestically and internationally.

¶3. (C) Minister Bildt assented to all five points, and noted that the conference of foreign ministers could be a key moment in which to emphasize more Afghan ownership of the political landscape following the election.

Setting the Stakes for a Second Administration

¶4. (C) Expressing concern that President Karzai still seems to think that we are here on an expeditionary mission to kill foreign fighters operating in Afghanistan and that he is just renting land to us for that purpose, Ambassador Eikenberry proposed that the second administration could be an opportunity to clarify anew the relationship between the international community and the Karzai administration. First, we must disabuse President Karzai of the notion that we are just another imperialist force or that we

are really here because of China and because we want bases here for strategic regional purposes. Heretofore, President Karzai has expressed negligible political interest in the development of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP), key components of a successful sovereign nation. We need to give him long-term security guarantees so that he will understand the importance of investing in these institutions, Eikenberry said, while assuring him that we will continue to support Afghanistan's security infrastructure as an element of their sovereign nation.

¶5. (C) A key agenda item for a second Karzai administration could be the reconciliation process. Ambassador Eikenberry questioned Bildt whether this would pose a public relations problem with the domestic audiences of the European Union. The reconciliation effort, he noted, could be a key opportunity for the Karzai administration to show progress in the development of Afghan governance. Until now, the reconciliation process has been marred by a lack of infrastructure and resources, both of which the international community could help to provide. Bildt assured us that reconciliation would not be a problem in Europe unless it was perceived as rolling back women's rights, educational development, and other key human rights issues. He noted

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there were constitutional constraints in Europe to supporting programs representing an erosion of human rights in Afghanistan, but affirmed that he did not see any evidence that could support an argument along those lines. The delegation called for the Afghans to establish a precise concept for integration before the process can begin.

Maintaining the Legitimacy of the Elections

¶6. (C) Minister Bildt expressed concerns that the legitimacy of the election was being called into question. He noted that while the conference in Paris of special representatives was "perfectly normal and routine," it had been "blown up" by the press, who were insinuating that the special representatives would emerge from closed doors at the conference and declare the winner of the election. Ambassador Eikenberry said that the same message had been relayed to him by a group of pro-Karzai parliamentarians who had called at the Embassy on August 30 (reftel). Likewise, Eikenberry noted that Karzai has begun to express great frustration with the international media, whom he claims are pitted against him and are trying to undermine the credibility of the elections by exaggerating claims of fraud. Eikenberry also noted that Karzai and his supports may attack the findings of the Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC) as biased, because it has foreigners in key leadership positions.

Smoothing Relations with the Palace

¶7. (C) Responding to Minister Bildt's statement that both President Karzai and Foreign Minister Spanta had "cast words" that were "not directed at me," on the subject of post-election posturing, Eikenberry explained the miscommunication that had occurred between Karzai and SRAP Holbrooke regarding the possibility of a second round of elections: Holbrooke had stated in a phone call with other Special Representatives that, if there were to be a second round, the international community would need to coordinate to support the effort. This was misreported to the Afghan government as USG advocacy for holding a second round, no matter the final results of the IEC's election process. Eikenberry reassured Bildt that he had worked closely with FM Spanta and President Karzai to dispel this myth; the story seemed to have blown over, and relations between the U.S. and President Karzai were and back on track. EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 09KABUL2768, ABDULLAH THOUGHTFUL ABOUT HIS NEXT MOVE

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL2768	2009-09-10 15:03	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO2608

OO RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

DE RUEHBUL #2768/01 2531534

ZNY SSSSS ZZH

O 101534Z SEP 09

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1413

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 002768

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 09/10/2019

TAGS PGOV, PREL, AF

SUBJECT: ABDULLAH THOUGHTFUL ABOUT HIS NEXT MOVE

REF: KABUL 2767

Classified By: D/Ambassador Francis Ricciardone, Reason 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (S) In a meeting September 9, presidential challenger Dr. Abdullah Abdullah told Ambassador Eikenberry that he had not anticipated the elections process taking so long. While he wanted to let the process play out completely he might rethink his next move in view of whether a second round would occur sufficiently soon truly to benefit the country. End Summary.

Still Under Pressure - But Calm

¶2. (S) We met Abdullah late at night, alone with one notetaker, after his long day which included a ceremony commemorating the eighth anniversary of the death of his mentor, Massoud. Tired but relaxed, Abdullah exhibited some of his usual humor -- he noted that he'd said hello to IEC Chairman Ludin but not kissed him at the ceremony; Ludin said "don't turn your face from me" and Abdullah had replied "I won't if you don't turn YOUR face from Mecca" - a Dari expression for lying. The ceremony had been well-attended by former Mujahedin, who are currently on either side of the presidential race; Abdullah said that "only Massoud's spirit" could have unified such a group. He claimed he was the only one who got standing ovations from the crowd.

¶3. (S) Abdullah complained that the Ministry of Interior was circulating a letter accusing him and his supporters, such as Balkh Governor Atta, of distributing weapons (reftel). He called this an "irresponsible" allegation and counter-accused the government of distributing weapons to self-defense groups in Konduz and Balkh as part of a widespread program. Saying that he doesn't want "anything to ignite anywhere" he added that in this highly emotional time, the difference between rumors and facts must be clarified. Eikenberry said that we have looked into these allegations and found no areas of concern. Abdullah added that he has recently completed his round of consultations with all his provincial supporters and has discouraged demonstrations since they could become excuses for violence.

I Didn't Think it Would Take So Long

¶4. (S) Ambassador Eikenberry stressed to Abdullah that his conduct during the campaign, and now, has made him a national figure with a real future in Afghan politics. He reiterated the U.S. position that we are committed to a credible process and noted that the most senior U.S. leadership was

interested in learning about Dr. Abdullah's thoughts on a way forward. Eikenberry noted that we were now faced with an issue that complicates the process: the possibility that the partial recount that the ECC has ordered could extend into the winter season; if so, a second round, if it were ordered, could not be held until Spring 2010. He noted that a failure of the elections process would have a huge impact in the United States, given the many years of effort and commitment we have given to Afghanistan. A successful campaign process and good day of voting, all led by the Afghans for the first time, are being overshadowed by the current stalemate.

¶5. (S) Abdullah appeared subdued as he responded that he didn't want such a long period of uncertainty; he thought that disqualifying obvious fraud would have brought Karzai's number below 50 percent long before now. "I can take it for longer, but what about the country?" he asked, noting that Karzai would keep making decisions anyway during the period of uncertainty, and that his own followers were in danger of harassment or worse, and some teachers who supported him had lost their jobs. The ECC "has guts" he said - but "how long will it take?" A process dragging on until April could jeopardize public opinion in the United States, which like all public opinion is "fickle." U.S. support, once lost, will not come back, he said. Abdullah also admitted the strong possibility of Karzai winning a second round.

Abdullah on Karzai: Holding the Nation Hostage

¶6. (S) Abdullah indulged in a variety of criticisms of Karzai, saying that he was working for his own interests against those of the whole country. Abdullah said Karzai reportedly asked his Defense Minister "Your ANA can manage without the Americans, can't it?" but the answer was "We get 400,000 liters of petrol a day from them; without them, we'd end our operations in two days."

KABUL 00002768 002 OF 002

¶7. (S) When Karzai's people had approached him three months ago, Abdullah said, he refused to join them because "I couldn't influence him when he had good people around him, and now he has bad people advising him." He gave Karzai two messages at that time: don't run for president, you will have a great legacy and wipe away all your mistakes if you give up power; or if you do run, don't try to rig the elections. Now, Abdullah said, Karzai will keep digging in, whatever the damage to Afghanistan, and "we're all stuck" with him. Abdullah ended with the acerbic note that "the one thing that bothers me is that we shouldn't allow one person to hold the destiny of the nation hostage."

What Next? The Good of the Country

¶8. (S) Abdullah admitted that he had been "approached" recently by Karzai's National Security Advisor about a deal to end the election standoff, but clarified that it was "not a dialogue" since he wanted to take his time and let the process run its course. He was also approached by the brother of Karzai's Vice Presidential running mate (and fellow Panjshiri) Marshall Fahim, who warned him that he would not have support in a second round and should make a deal now. Abdullah said that Karzai has talked to some of his supporters, such as former President Rabbani, but that he sees no way that he "himself" would take part in a Karzai government -- leaving open the possibility that one of his associates may do so. The Ambassador noted that despite rumors that the United States was pushing a national unity government, we have never done so; Abdullah said he believed us and appreciated our support for the process.

¶9. (S) Looking at his future, Abdullah said that while he wanted to create a national and cross-ethnic movement which could become a true political party, he could not see any point in focusing on Parliamentary elections in 2010 given the IEC's corruption and double-dealing in this election. Some "good MP's" told him they won't survive the next election due to IEC corruption, he said. The IEC has had to put aside ballots in this election because the results can't possibly be entered into their computers due to the fraud controls - but then they "play with words" and refuse to invalidate those ballots. Their actions are a "tragic joke" he said, adding that the problem for Karzai's camp and the IEC turned out to be that they had planned on a higher turnout which would have covered up fraud. Abdullah expressed anger at some of the most egregious examples of fraud -- noting that rural Paktika province apparently had the same number of voters as Balkh (whose capital is populous Mazar-e-Sharif).

¶10. (S) Being in the opposition would be a hard and vulnerable position, Abdullah said, but capitalizing on this new political movement was crucial because it is the only "healthy" movement with a chance to expand. Abdullah noted that he had supported a large number of Provincial Council candidates during the election, after vetting them carefully first. He believes that many did very well in their provinces and can become a base for future political leadership; he is maintaining a network of linkages for such a future movement. Karzai had had a "golden opportunity", Abdullah said, but ruined it and is only "declining." The country is vulnerable to ethnic fascism, extremism, drug trafficking, and organized crime -- all of which interests will oppose the national movement he hopes to create, and all of which are allied with Karzai, he alleged.

¶11. (S) Abdullah exhorted the U.S. not to give up on the process yet, saying that "expediency for immediate concerns" could undermine the rule of law and that longer term interests should not be sacrificed to shorter term ones. Eikenberry acknowledged that there were competing imperatives of

the credibility of the process and pressures of time, telling Abdullah he should make political choices to help the situation knowing that he is at a period of maximum influence. Abdullah gave no immediate indication of his next move but agreed to remain in close contact. EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 09KABUL3068, AHMED WALI KARZAI AND GOVERNOR WEESA ON GOVERNANCE

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL3068	2009-10-03 04:04	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO0787

OO RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

DE RUEHBUL #3068/01 2760446

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

O 030446Z OCT 09

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1794

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 003068

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SRAP, SCA/FO, SCA/A, EUR/RPM

STATE PASS USAID FOR ASIA/SCAA

USFOR-A FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/27/2019

TAGS: [KDEM](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: AHMED WALI KARZAI AND GOVERNOR WEESA ON GOVERNANCE

IN KANDAHAR

Classified By: Interagency Provincial Affairs Deputy Coordinator Hoyt Y

ee for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: in a lengthy and cordial introductory meeting with Kandahar Provincial Council Chief Ahmed Wali Karzai (AWK) and Governor Tooryalai Weesa, Senior Civilian Representative (SCR) for the South Frank Ruggiero underscored the need for improved governance in Kandahar, and highlighted the importance of naming credible provincial governors and district officials before the inauguration to send a positive signal on good governance to the Afghan people and the international community. Both AWK and Weesa acknowledged the weakness of the government in Kandahar, and outlined their proposals for local solutions, including the empowerment of shuras of district elders for local dispute resolution rather than the courts. AWK also emphasized large-scale infrastructure projects rather than smaller cash-for-work program, and his desire to see private security companies in the province under one licensee. AWK discounted the role of elections and their importance to Afghans. End Summary.

AWK Nervous but Eager to Share Views

¶2. (C) SCR Ruggiero met with AWK and Governor Weesa on September 28 in the Governor's Palace in Kandahar City. The Representative of Canada in Kandahar (RoCK) Ben Rowswell also attended the meeting, which was held in a wood-paneled room, beneath a large photo of President Hamid Karzai. (Note: While we must deal with AWK as the head of the Provincial Council, he is widely understood to be corrupt and a narcotics trafficker. End Note) AWK, dressed in a crisp white shalwar kameez and pinstriped vest, appeared nervous, though eager to express his views on the international presence in Kandahar.

The Importance of Good Governance

¶3. (C) SCR emphasized the criticality of good governance in the province, and said the United States would like to see improvement in the post-election period. He said the United States is ready to work with the GIROA to strengthen key provincial and district level governance, but we are only willing to expend our resources in people and programs if we have confidence those resources will pay off and make a real difference.

¶4. (C) Both AWK and Weesa acknowledged there was a credibility gap between the public and the government. Weesa said it was a problem that in the 10 months he had been in office, the government had not been able to deliver 24-hour electricity to the people, and that 150 factories had closed because of it. He said people looked to NGOs more than to the government to deliver services, and he complained that NGOs poach workers from the government by offering higher wages. SCR emphasized the importance of naming credible provincial governors and district officials before the inauguration to send a positive signal on good governance to the Afghan people and the international community.

¶5. (C) AWK suggested one way of fighting corruption in the province would be to re-establish and empower district shuras, instead of judges or police, to settle local disputes. Currently there is only one judge for the five districts around Kandahar City, he said, and a council of local elders would be more effective at resolving land, water and other disputes. (Note: there are a total of seven judges for all 17 districts in the province.) "You can easily bribe

the chief of police or a judge,8 he said, &but you can't bribe 50 elders." He said the provincial council, with the support of the governor, could initiate the formation of these district shuras, which would consist of 10-15 elders elected by the people.

Infrastructure Priorities, Private Security Contractors and
Conflicts of Interest

¶6. (C) AWK said he had been in Kandahar almost continuously since 1992, and that the U.S. reputation in the province was built on the back of two key infrastructure projects done in the 1950s and 60s. He said what would make a difference to the population today would be similar large-scale, labor-intensive projects that would provide jobs to the people and keep them from being recruited by the Taliban. AWK cautioned against the use of small scale projects and

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additional cash-for-work programs; he stated that the use of implementing partners does not allow expenditure of development resources to reach villagers and other local Afghans. Both he and Weesa added that it should be the local elders who are empowered to distribute these jobs, not officials or companies from outside.

Putting Private Security Under the Direction of the
Provincial Council

¶7. (C) In the same vein of providing "local solutions to

local problems," as he put it, AWK recommended a "local solution" to the problem of providing security in the area. He said that currently, there are many jihadi commanders with militias who independently provide protection to convoys and projects, but that a proposal before the Ministry of Interior would bring all these commanders under one umbrella in Kandahar, with one person given the license for the private security sector. He said there would be a meeting Wednesday (September 30) of all the security companies, under the auspices of the Provincial Council, to appoint this representative to send to Kabul. (Note: AWK is understood to have a stake in private security contracting, and has aggressively lobbied the Canadians to have his security services retained for the Dahla Dam refurbishment. Both he and the governor have tried to exert control over how contracts are awarded in the province) all of which could be a significant conflict of interest in the province. End Note.)

Elections: What's the Point?

¶8. (C) In answer to a question from the RoCK and the SCR about the credibility of the elections, AWK said democracy was new for Afghanistan, and that people in the region did not understand the point of having one election, let alone two. "The people do not like change," he said. "They think, the President is alive, and everything is fine. Why have an election?"

Comment

¶9. (C) The meeting with AWK highlights one of our major

challenges in Afghanistan: how to fight corruption and connect the people to their government, when the key government officials are themselves corrupt. Given AWK's reputation for shady dealings, his recommendations for large, costly infrastructure projects should be viewed with a healthy dose of skepticism. Still, his observations about the unintended consequences of how NGOs and other international partners do their work, e.g. "poaching" of government staff, track with some of our own concerns, including about how to promote Afghan-led solutions. We will continue to urge AWK to improve his own credibility gap as well as that of the GIRoA.

EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 09KABUL3324, FOLLOW-UP REQUEST -- RESOURCING EFFORTS TO DISMANTLE THE NEW

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL3324	2009-10-18 07:07	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXYZ0000

RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBUL #3324 2910721

ZNY SSSSS ZZH

R 180721Z OCT 09 ZDK

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2233

INFO RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC 0916

RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 8023

RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI 2002

S E C R E T KABUL 003324

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SRAP, S/SCT, EEB, SCA/RA, and SCA/A

DEPT PASS AID/ASIA BUREAU

TREASURY FOR A/S DAVID COHEN and TFFC - BRIAN GRANT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/18/2019

TAGS: EFIN EINV KTFN PREL AF

SUBJECT: FOLLOW-UP REQUEST -- RESOURCING EFFORTS TO DISMANTLE THE NEW
ANSARI HAWALA NETWORK AND OTHER ILLICIT FINANCING THREATS

REF: KABUL 2791

Classified By: CDDEA Ambassador E. Anthony Wayne for reasons 1.4 (b)
and (d).

¶1. (S) As discussed in reftel, information strongly suggests Afghanistan's New Ansari hawala network is facilitating bribes and other wide-scale illicit cash transfers for corrupt Afghan officials and is providing illicit financial services for narco-traffickers, insurgents, and criminals through an array of front companies in Afghanistan and the UAE.

¶2. (S) Headquartered in Kabul, the New Ansari hawala network has connections to Dubai and other global financial markets. Law enforcement and other components in Mission Afghanistan and ISAF have been investigating New Ansari and briefed Washington agencies in a September 8 SVTC. As noted in ref, moving forward against New Ansari requires an interagency approach here in country as well as in Washington. Such efforts will need to include better organizing and resourcing USG efforts to identify and disrupt financial linkages in Afghanistan and in key regional financial hubs.

¶3. (S) Embassy would appreciate a response to the requests for additional resources/support contained in reftel. These include the need to fully staff the Afghan Threat Finance Cell (ATFC) -- the total number of positions required is 49, but only 22 of those positions are filled. Moreover, a higher percentage of those slots should be filled with more senior and experienced interagency analysts and at least one public corruption prosecutor. The ATFC also urgently requires access to translators who can accurately and quickly process an increasing amount of wire intercept information, including complex technical and financial records. In addition, the current split in the ATFC between Bagram Airfield and Kabul should be minimized. To integrate the ATFC better into broader intelligence analysis efforts, it would be advisable to establish a lead base of operations in Kabul. The ATFC would continue to forward deploy liaison staff at each regional command to ensure country-wide coverage.

¶4. (C) Mission appreciates Washington agencies' consideration and support of these requests. We look forward to a rapid response.

EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 09KABUL3364, AFGHANISTAN: CAPITAL FLIGHT AND ITS IMPACT ON FUTURE

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL3364	2009-10-19 13:01	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

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RR RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

DE RUEHBUL #3364/01 2921358

ZNY SSSSS ZZH

R 191358Z OCT 09
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2381
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC 0919
S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 003364

SIPDIS

DEPT PASS TO S/SRAP, S/CT, EEB, and SCA/A

EO 12958 DECL: 10/19/2019

TAGS EINV,EFIN, KTFN, PGOV, AF

SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: CAPITAL FLIGHT AND ITS IMPACT ON FUTURE
STABILITY

REF: A. KABUL 2791 B. KABUL 3326

Classified By: CDDEA Ambassador E. Anthony Wayne for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1.(S) SUMMARY: Afghanistan's is a cash-based economy, relying on historic trade linkages with neighboring and regional partners. Given Afghanistan's strategic location, ongoing conflict, and deep involvement in illicit trade (e.g., narcotics), as well as some neighboring country currency exchange policies, vast amounts of cash come and go from the country on a weekly, monthly, and annual basis. Before the August 20 election, \$600 million in banking system withdrawals were reported; however, in recent months, some \$200 million has flowed back into the country. In terms of total money leaving the country, analysts are uncertain whether it is generated within Afghanistan or is moving through Afghanistan from other countries such as Pakistan (Pakistan's strict currency controls makes smuggling through Kabul International Airport (KIA) an attractive option). Experts also do not know the ratio of licit and illicit monies leaving the country. Given Afghanistan's general political uncertainty, lack of credible and safe investment opportunities, and unsettled election, it appears that individuals moved more money than normal out of the Afghan banking sector and country as a hedge before the elections. While some of the money appears to be returning, Mission -- with support from Washington agencies and other posts in the region -- will work to closely monitor the cash movements, both as a sign of public confidence in GIROA and for possible illicit financial activities. End summary.

Recent Trends

¶2. (S) While reports vary widely, records obtained from Kabul International Airport (KIA) support suspicions large amounts of physical cash transit from Kabul to Dubai on a weekly, monthly, and annual basis. According to confidential reports, more than \$190 million left Kabul for Dubai through KIA during July, August, and September. Actual amounts, however, could be much larger. An official claiming first-hand knowledge recently told the Treasury Attache some \$75 million transited through KIA bound for Dubai in one day during the month of July. The primary currencies identified at the airport for these three months include (in declining order): Saudi riyals, Euros, U.S. dollars, and UAE dirhams. Some Pakistani rupees and British pounds were also declared, but in much smaller amounts. Comparatively, in 2008, approximately \$600 million was declared at KIA and another 100 million Euros and 80 million British pounds were declared bound for Dubai, according to available reports compiled by the Central Bank's Financial Intelligence Unit. According to our sources, established couriers primarily use Pamir Airlines, which is owned by Kabul Bank and influential Afghans such as Mahmood Karzai and Mohammad Fahim who is President Hamid Karzai's current vice-presidential running mate.

One Factor: Election Unease

¶3. (S) In an October 7 meeting, Afghan Central Bank Governor Abdul Qadeer Fitrat stressed there are no indications of significant capital flight. He pointed to a stable exchange rate and increasing assets in the formal financial system as supporting his perspective. Fitrat also mentioned that the formal banking system is well capitalized and the regulatory capital ratio of all banking institutions is above the minimum threshold (12 percent of risk-weighted assets.) Nevertheless, Fitrat did note the Central Bank was aware roughly \$600 million had left Afghanistan's banking system before the elections, due, he said, tainty as to the outcome of the election and the prospects for the new government. Fitrat could not say what percentage of this money actually left the country. (Note: Nor are there statistics showing how much was withdrawn or transferred through the more informal hawala network. End note.) As of October 7, more than \$200 million has returned to the banking sector according to Fitrat. The Central Bank Governor restated this figure in an October 13 meeting between Fitrat and the Coordinating Director for Development and Economic Affairs (ref B).

¶4. (C) Separately, and in the same timeframe as the meeting with Fitrat, CEOs from several leading banks approached the Treasury Attache with concerns over significant cash withdrawals and wire transfers to other accounts in Dubai and Europe. In separate meetings October 12, several bankers reported deposits are growing and appeared positive about future prospects. However, the various bankers noted widespread uncertainty about the ongoing election

process and overall security situation will likely continue to spook Afghanistan's existing and potential investors, and as a result, undermine growth. One experienced banker flatly said no legitimate business person would keep significant sums of money in Afghanistan right now given the overwhelming risks of doing so.

KABUL 00003364 002 OF 002

Illicit Versus Licit

¶5. (C) Taking capital out of Afghanistan (physically through cash or value or by using wire transfer) is not illegal, as long as it is declared. For example, formal financial flows (e.g., wire transfers) over \$10,000 are recorded by banks and submitted to the Central Bank's Financial Intelligence Unit for analysis. All 17 licensed banks submit these reports on a monthly basis. Similarly, cash couriers transiting KIA or crossing the land border must declare carried cash if it exceeds \$20,000. This regulation is better enforced at KIA than along Afghanistan's porous borders, which further complicates full-understanding of this already complex problem-set.

¶6. (S) While it is impossible to know for sure at this point, our sense is the money leaving Afghanistan is likely a combination of illicit and licit proceeds. Drug traffickers, corrupt officials, and to a large extent licit business owners do not benefit from keeping millions of dollars in Afghanistan and instead are motivated (due to risk and return-on-investment) to move value into accounts and investments outside of Afghanistan. For example, the United Arab Emirates government revealed, as part of an ongoing Drug Enforcement Administration/Afghan Threat Finance Cell investigation, that it had stopped Afghan Vice-President Ahmad Zia Masood entering the country with \$52 million earlier this year -- a significant amount he was ultimately allowed to keep without revealing the money's origin or destination. Moreover, Sher Khan Farnood, the Chairman of Kabul Bank, reportedly owns 39 properties on the Palm Jumeirah in Dubai and has other financial interests spread widely beyond Afghanistan. (Note: Many other notable private individuals and public officials maintain assets (primarily property) outside Afghanistan, suggesting these individuals are extracting as much wealth as possible while conditions permit. End note.)

Comment

¶7. (S) The sense among Mission elements is that significant volumes of cash leave Afghanistan through wire transfers, the hawala network and physically through the airport. We do not know, however, whether this money is generated within Afghanistan or brought in from other countries such as Pakistan for transfer (Pakistan strictly enforces currency controls, making smuggling through KIA an attractive option.) We also do not know the ratio of licit and illicit monies leaving the country (with the former more likely to return at

some point.) Given Afghanistan's general political uncertainty, lack of credible and safe investment opportunities, and unsettled election, we are inclined to believe several individuals moved more money than normal out of the Afghan banking sector and country as a measure of protection before the elections. We will continue to monitor and engage on the issue here. However, input from Washington agencies as well as from other missions in the region will be key in developing a clearer understanding of the composition, size, and directions of these cash flows. End comment.

EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 09KABUL3423, AFGHANS WITH CODEL BURR ON ELECTIONS, SECURITY,

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09KABUL3423	2009-10-26 14:02	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

Appears in these articles:
<http://www.spiegel.de>

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PP RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

DE RUEHBUL #3423/01 2991426

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P 261426Z OCT 09

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2479

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 KABUL 003423

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/25/2019

TAGS: PGOV PHUM PREL KDEM AF

SUBJECT: AFGHANS WITH CODEL BURR ON ELECTIONS, SECURITY,

AND THE FUTURE

Classified By: Political Counselor Annie Pforzheimer, ...

Viewing cable 09KABUL3714, C) AFGHAN COMMERCE MINISTER DISCUSSES REFORM AGENDA

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL3714	2009-11-18 15:03	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN	Embassy Kabul

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RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBUL #3714/01 3221518

ZNY CCCCC ZZH (CCY ADXDBACF8 MSI8971 540A)

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3271

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 003714

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DEPT FOR S/SRAP AND SCA/A

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/18/2019

TAGS: ECON PGOV PREL EAID AF

SUBJECT: (C) AFGHAN COMMERCE MINISTER DISCUSSES REFORM AGENDA

Classified by Coordinating Director for Development and Economic Affairs Ambassador E. Anthony Wayne for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C//NF) SUMMARY: Reform-minded Afghan Commerce Minister Shahrani, who hopes for U.S. support to keep a ministerial job, argued on November 15 that President Karzai is under heavy pressure from Afghan politicians to accept less than ideal ministers and urged that the US and other donors talk not only to Karzai but also to those politicians to stress the importance of approving a good slate. Shahrani also shared his view of reforms needed in the new government, insights into fighting corruption, views on the importance of getting sub-national governance right, and the need for the government and donors to agree on specific performance benchmarks tied to aid delivery. End Summary.

¶2. (C//NF) Afghan Commerce Minister Shahrani told Coordinating Director for Development and Economic Affairs Wayne on November 15 that President Karzai is under great pressure from political leaders to accept a number of ministerial candidates whose technical skills are lacking. He specifically cited pressure from ex-warlord General Dostum, from ex-jihadist Professor Sayyaf and Hazara leader Mohaqqueq. Shahrani, who wants U.S. support to stay on in the cabinet, expressed concern that Karzai would not resist the pressure for political payback on his own, and urged the U.S. and other donors to communicate directly with these political groupings to indicate that if a weak or corrupt set of ministers was put in place then the U.S. and others would be forced to withdraw their support. He argued that these political leaders are only thinking of dividing up the spoils rather than the quality of government needed to tackle Afghanistan's problems. Shahrani repeatedly argued that the next five years are essential for Afghanistan and the first months of the new Karzai administration are key to getting the right reforms in place to really bring about positive change in the years ahead. Afghanistan needs the U.S. and other donors to have a chance for real progress, he said. He urged that the U.S. speak frankly in private to Karzai as well as key Afghan political leaders.

¶3. (SBU) Shahrani argued that it is essential that the U.S. and other international donors get as many specific commitments as possible from Karzai, in the inaugural speech if possible and subsequently then in some sort of joint document between donors and Afghanistan. A key step is to press for the President to be clear on basic commitments in his inaugural speech, especially about good governance and fighting corruption. Shahrani said he hoped the President would approve up to ten key areas for reform in the first year of his administration. He and Finance Minister Zakhilwal agree, according to Sharani, that the reform areas should be in areas where the population will see a difference in delivery of services.

¶4. (C//NF) Shahrani underscored the need for very good ministerial and gubernatorial appointments and the concomitant reform of government organizations. He said that he and other reform-minded ministers still believe they have Karzai's support to name lead ministers for five key clusters: 1) finance, economy and commerce; 2) agriculture and rural Development; 3) human development (education and health); 4) security; and 5) justice/rule of law. Cleaning up the last sector will be essential, he argued, especially given the degree of corruption currently in the Attorney General's ministry and the judicial system. If this does not happen, it will be very hard to address corruption in the rest of the government. Similarly, the executive office of the President needs serious reorganization so the President gets a good and balanced flow of information and advice and so that ministerial coordination and cabinet decision-making can be significantly enhanced, Sharani said. (Note: This is a complaint we have heard from a wide variety of sources, from donor nations to Palace insiders. End note.)

¶5. (C//NF) Turning to corruption more broadly, Shahrani argued that State-owned enterprises need to be turned into independent commercial entities rapidly (on the way to privatization), as they are great sources of corruption. Shahrani also singled out the Transportation

Ministry as a hot bed of corruption, especially its airport operations and its "private enterprise group." Finance Minister Zakhilwal had recently broken up a corruption ring at Kabul Airport, but the private sector group is an even bigger problem. This unit includes people who collect fees on trucks traveling in Afghanistan. Estimates are that about \$200 million are collected yearly but only \$30 million are turned over to the government, he said. Individuals pay up to \$250,000 for the post heading this office in Herat, for example, and end up owning beautiful mansions as well as making lucrative political donations. This ministry should be a top target for cleaning up in the new regime.

¶6. (SBU) In his November 15 conversation with Ambassador Wayne, Shahrani said, 14 of Afghanistan's governors have been identified by Local Governance minister Popal as bad performers and/or corrupt. These 14 should be fired, and the new government should implement procedures for selecting governors based on merit and for reviewing performance on a yearly basis. Such a performance review process should be put in place for all top officials. There must also be a greater focus on improving service delivery at the provincial level, he argued. Governors should be given more substantial operational budgets as well as placed under more rigorous auditing controls. The big municipalities also need careful attention, first in good mayoral appointments and then in greatly improved management, tax collection and service delivery.

¶7. (C//NF) Turning to international assistance, Shahrani argued that donors should tie additional aid to clear benchmarks and timelines. This should be publically announced as part of a broader agreement, and donors should be tough in demanding agreed performance benchmarks before distributing additional assistance. Such an agreement should call for some overarching commitments, with each ministry receiving aid committed to achieving its own set of benchmarks in consultations with donors. There should be focus on improving delivery of services

to the population and mechanisms should be put in place to measure success. Shahrani suggested that the action plans for ministries should have three to four year time horizons.

¶8. (C//NF) Comment: Minister Shahrani is working closely with the Ministers of Finance, Agriculture, Education and local government to encourage bold reform moves by the new Karzai administration. While some of the specific ideas he shared may be his own, they are consistent with what other reform-minded ministers have been saying and urging. Shahrani clearly hopes for U.S. support in keeping a cabinet position. He has been a good partner on a range of commercial and economic issues and an energetic proponent of reaching a trade agreement with Pakistan. He has also gone out of his way to help on bilateral issues such as finalizing arrangements for U.S. Consulate leases.

EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 09KABUL3890, KANDAHAR POLITICS COMPLICATE U.S. OBJECTIVES IN AFGHANISTAN

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL3890	2009-12-06 09:09	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO8779

OO RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

DE RUEHBUL #3890/01 3400953

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3740

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 01 of 03 KABUL 003890

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SRAP HOLBROOKE SCA/FO, SCA/A

STATE PASS USAID ASIA/SCAA

USFOR-A FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/30/2019

TAGS: KDEM PGOV PTER AF

SUBJECT: KANDAHAR POLITICS COMPLICATE U.S. OBJECTIVES IN AFGHANISTAN

REF: A. KABUL 3748

Â¶B. KABUL 3595

Classified By: Coordinator Director for Development and Economic Affairs
E. Anthony Wayne, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

Â¶1. (C) Summary: As we step up engagement with GIROA leadership in Kandahar, it is important to understand the dynamics of political power and how fundamental Kandahar is to the fortunes of the Karzai regime. It is from Kandahar that President Karzai's claim to national legitimacy originates and from the province that the Karzai family's position as a semi-modern aristocracy stems. As the kingpin of Kandahar, the President's younger half-brother Ahmed Wali Karzai (AWK) dominates access to economic resources, patronage, and protection. Much of the real business of running Kandahar takes place out of public sight, where AWK operates, parallel to formal government structures, through a network of political clans that use state institutions to protect and enable licit and illicit enterprises. A dramatic example is the Arghandab river valley, an agriculturally rich and heavily-populated district strategically located at the

northern gate to Kandahar City, where the President's direct intervention in the Alikozai tribal succession increased Karzai political dominance over two of the most valuable resources in Kandahar -- fertile land and water. The tribal power structure in Kandahar seriously complicates our efforts to bring formal justice and modern governance to the region. In the absence of GIROA initiatives to bring key individuals closely linked to the Karzai regime to justice, RC South is pursuing a bottom-up approach to the Arghandab shura. End Summary.

¶2. (C) As we step up engagement with GIROA leadership in Kandahar in pursuit of U.S. security, stabilization, development and anti-corruption goals, it is important to understand the dynamics of political power and how fundamental Kandahar is to the fortunes of the Karzai regime (Ref A). It is from Kandahar, not Kabul, that President Karzai's claim to national legitimacy originates, and where, through leadership of the royal Durrani Popalzai tribe, he has a true political base. In Kandahar, political clans consisting of personal, tribal, marriage and economic alliances engage in balance of power competition and cooperation. At the pinnacle of Kandahar's political clans, the Karzai clan functions as a semi-modern aristocracy, with the President ultimately presiding over the nation.

¶3. (C) As the kingpin of Kandahar, the President's younger half-brother, Ahmed Wali Karzai, rules over political deal and decision-making at the provincial level and thereby dominates access to economic resources, patronage and protection. The overriding purpose that unifies his political roles as Chairman of the Kandahar Provincial Council and as the President's personal representative to the South is the enrichment, extension and perpetuation of the

Karzai clan, and along with it their branch of the Popalzai tribe. This applies equally to his entrepreneurial and his alleged criminal activities. AWK derives authority and legitimacy from his relationship to President Karzai, from the relative discipline and elite position of the Popalzai tribe and from his access to resources. In Kandahar's political realm, he is an unrivaled strongman. For example, the Kandahar Provincial Council, which is made up largely of individuals who are personally beholden to him, wields serious influence, despite its lack of statutory powers. It is currently going about its business unhindered despite the fraud charges that have prevented the IEC from certifying the recent Provincial Council election results (Ref B). xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

¶4. (C) Much of the real business of running Kandahar takes place out of public sight, where AWK operates parallel to formal government structures through a network of political clans that use state institutions to protect and enable licit and illicit enterprises. At its core, this clan network has a caste-like division of labor. The Popalzai occupy the leadership pinnacle. The Barakzai, with Gul Agha Sherzai as their leader, compete for power and business, which includes, for example, contracting at Kandahar Air Field and transport on Highway 4 from the Pakistan border at Spin Boldak. The Noorzai occupy key positions in the ANSF and are the traditional racketeers (with ties to narcotics trafficking). The Achekzais along the border are the traditional smugglers, and the Alikozai are the traditional

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warriors.

¶5. (C) Among Karzai family-run businesses are alleged control of trucking on Highway 1 (the Ring Road) through Kandahar Province and beyond, private security contracting and real estate. The last notably includes Ayno Mina, an ostentatious Karzai property development for Afghan elites east of Kandahar City, built on land obtained from the government at rock bottom prices, with financing guaranteed by OPIC. In a land of popular strongmen, AWK is widely unpopular in Kandahar, because he rules exclusively rather than inclusively; he is not perceived as caring about the population at large but rather, as a traditional Pashtun Khan using his power to "feed his tribe."

¶6. (C) A good example of how the Karzais' power plays out in Kandahar can be found in the Arghandab river valley, an agriculturally rich and heavily populated district strategically located at the northern gate to Kandahar City, where the Alikozai tribe makes up 60 percent of the population. They received the valley as a reward for assisting the founder of Afghanistan, Ahmed Shah Durrani, conquer Kandahar in the mid-1700s. As the guardians of Kandahar, the Alikozais have prevented all invaders from occupying Arghandab. The Soviets fought hard but never took it and as a result were never secure in Kandahar City. The Taliban's rise to power began in Kandahar, when the powerful Alikozai leader Mullah Naqibullah decided to give them the keys to the city, and he turned on them to assist their overthrow in 2001. When Mullah Naqib died of a heart attack in 2007, President Karzai took the unusual step of flying to Kandahar, where he anointed Naqib's son Karimullah as the new leader of the Alikozai. However, the move had significant blowback. Mullah Naqib had never designated his young and inexperienced son as his successor, and Karzai's intervention generated resentment

among senior Alikozai elders. The resulting split weakened tribal unity, a vulnerability the Taliban quickly exploited, and it remains a present source of instability.

¶7. (C) The Arghandab story appears on the surface to be a case of bungled tribal exploitation. On the contrary, by intervening in the Alikozai succession, the Karzais linked the most important tribal faction to control over the provincial government in a line that runs from AWK to their putative leader Karimullah, who in turn holds sway over the District Administrator and local shura. The Karzais also increased their influence over two of the most valuable resources in Kandahar (which is largely desert) -- fertile land and water. The Arghandab river valley, contains some of the best agricultural land in Afghanistan; it famously produces 80 percent of the country's pomegranates. Production and land values there will increase greatly as a result of Canada's "signature" rehabilitation of the Dahla Dam and irrigation works, originally constructed by the U.S. in the 1950s. Karzai businesses are also set to acquire multiple patronage benefits from Dahla Dam construction and security contracts, but the main prize will be political control over long-term allocation of water flows, including to Popalzai and Barakzai areas that lie well downstream, via underground canals to the south.

¶8. (C) It is no accident that AWK lobbied the project's Canadian sponsors on behalf of the Watan Group, the eventual winner of the Dahla Dam security contract, whose CEO is his cousin, U.S. national Rashid Popal. More than business is involved; most of the project lies in Alikozai majority areas, but the Popalzai will control security, and Alikozai leader Karimullah was incensed over this treatment by his Karzai sponsors when he found out. A follow-on to warlord

militias, private security companies today also serve personal interests as camouflaged vehicles for protection rackets in construction, transportation and drug smuggling. AWK's determined but so far unsuccessful efforts to acquire MOI-sanction to license all contractors and their weapons through the Provincial Council has the potential to arm the Karzai clan with a non-state entity that can insure against whoever should come to power in Afghanistan.

¶9. (C) Comment: The traditional tribal power structures in Kandahar have many implications for U.S. objectives in the region. Initiatives that rely on GIROA to take the lead in bringing to justice major corrupt figures or negative influences in Kandahar contain a serious dilemma: they would include some of Karzai's closest relatives and allies and require the prosecution of people on whom we often rely for assistance and/or support. Second, any efforts to bring these individuals to justice could compromise the informal

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governing networks to which Kandaharis have become accustomed, without necessarily replacing them with effective GIROA officials or improving the delivery of services. A focus on bottom-up local solutions, such as identifying and reaching out to the multiple factions in Arghandab as well as the official shura, which RC South is pursuing, could offset this problem to some degree. End Comment.

¶10. (U) This assessment, derived from multiple sources including information provided by over a dozen knowledgeable Afghans, presents a perspective that is widely perceived among the Afghan public and consistent with

documentation in open sources and intelligence analyses.

Mussomeli

Viewing cable 09KABUL4027, KARZAI ON ANSF, CABINET, AND 2010 ELECTIONS

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL4027	2009-12-16 09:09	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO7512

OO RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4013

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 KABUL 004027

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 12/15/2019

TAGS PGOV, PREL, AF

SUBJECT: KARZAI ON ANSF, CABINET, AND 2010 ELECTIONS

REF: KABUL 3973

Classified By: Ambassador K. Eikenberry reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (S) Summary: President Karzai reiterated to Admiral Mullen and Ambassador Eikenberry on December 14 his commitment to Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) development, Interior Ministry (MOI) reform, and to obtaining sufficient security force recruits and training. Although Karzai's reported cabinet picks appear generally positive, he is still

considering Ismail Khan for Energy and Water. He told us that a few monthsâ€™ delay in the 2010 Parliamentary elections is necessary and that he is considering holding a Loya Jirga afterwards. End Summary.

Karzai Focused on ANSF

¶2. (S) In a meeting with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mullen, Ambassador Eikenberry, Defense Minister Wardak, Presidential Chief of Staff Daudzai, National Security Advisor Rassoul, Deputy National Security Advisor Shaydah, Presidential Press Spokesperson Houmanzada, and Afghan National Army Chief of Staff Bismillah Khan on December 14, President Karzai appeared relaxed although admittedly tired and in need of a vacation. Karzai said he planned to take three or four days vacation in Europe between conferences in London, Munich and Davos. He appeared more helpful and committed to ANSF development than ever, expressing interest in obtaining sufficient recruits to reflect geographic and ethnic balances, and a commitment to establishing a training timeline.

¶3. (S) Defense Minister Wardak said Army recruitment was improving; last monthâ€™s return of 873 formerly AWOL soldiers to their units was a promising sign. Admiral Mullen noted that the 2011 drawdown date was not a political decision, but rather, a U.S. military recommendation. Karzai said that if the Afghan government was over half way to the 2011 ANSF recruitment and training goals, it would be a success. (Comment: Although Karzai was clearly attempting to manage expectations, he also seemed to be personally vested in this endeavor -- a positive, and relatively new development. End Comment.) Karzai said he will have his Defense Minister and Chief of Defense, â€œon the road frequentlyâ€ to ensure this project moved forward.

¶4. (S) Karzai inquired whether ANSF expansion would include only an increase in training, or also an increase in more sophisticated military equipment for Afghan internal defense. Admiral Mullen said the United States would continue to equip the Afghan forces for counter-insurgency operations, since the territorial defense was not currently a priority, especially considering the U.S. strategic defense relationship with Afghanistan. Wardak further noted that more heavy weapons were need for the ANA over time to increase their capability to defend themselves, and could also be used to fight the Taliban. Admiral Mullen responded that Afghanistanâ€™s military requirements will naturally evolve over time, but emphasized that heavy weaponry was not needed at present.

¶5. (S) Ambassador Eikenberry mentioned how successful the 2003 Ministry of Defense (MOD) reform was to this institution, noting that the 2006 MOI reform was neither as comprehensive nor as successful. President Karzai agreed, and noted -- characteristically -- that this was due to the failures of UNAMA, the United States, and the E.U. When Eikenberry noted the serious problems in the senior MOI leadership, Karzai acknowledged this was also an important

issue. He preferred, however, to work on MOI reform with the United States, not the E.U. or UNAMA.

Non-U.S. NATO Troops Can Stay Home

¶6. (S) Karzai asked if the other NATO countries were committed to sending 7,000 non-U.S. NATO troops, and if so, would those numbers be several contributions of 100-200 troops, or larger commitments by a fewer countries. He remarked that if the commitments are small contingents from many nations, it would be more of a "headache." He quipped that if these countries only announced their plan to deploy additional troops, without actually sending them, it would be easier. Admiral Mullen noted the political significance of these troop commitments, despite the challenges they might entail. Admiral Mullen asked Karzai for his assessment of NATO ISAF efforts to limit civilian casualties. Karzai responded that General McChrystal was doing an excellent job

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with his instructions to limit civilian casualties because of the emphasis he placed on restricting the use of aerial bombardments. However, he said more needed to be done with the Special Operations troops, noting recent reports from Laghman Province of civilian casualties during two separate operations.

Skepticism on Pakistan

¶7. (S) Karzai expressed concern over Pakistan, noting that the Taliban may decide to lay low there until 2011. Admiral Mullen replied that if the Taliban decided to give that security space to the Afghans, it would be to our advantage, as it would allow time for the ANSF and security to be built up sufficiently to defend themselves. Karzai appeared to accept this answer. Ambassador Eikenberry emphasized that the United States shared Afghan concerns over Pakistan providing sanctuary to the Afghan Taliban, but noted Pakistani Foreign Minister Qureshi had stated publicly at the recent IISS Manama Dialogue in Bahrain that there was an Afghan-Pakistani Taliban nexus - a possible signal of an evolution in their thinking. He also stated, however, that Pakistan was focused, at present, on its greater threat, the Pakistan Taliban. Minister Wardak said he had received contrary reports that the Pakistani Army was helping the Afghan Taliban obtain sanctuary in cities "deeper into Pakistan."

Cabinet Selections

¶8. (S) President Karzai told Eikenberry after Admiral Mullen's departure, with FM Spanta and NSC Rassoul in attendance, that he still had no date for his cabinet announcement but that he had asked the Parliament to remain in session for the time being. He plans on giving Parliament about 75 percent of the cabinet list and expects Parliamentary support for "almost all" of his nominations. He said the National Security Ministers would stay on (reftel), as well as the Finance, Commerce, Communications, Agriculture and Health Ministers.

¶9. (S) Karzai said the current Higher Education Minister Dafur would be replaced by the current Governor of Kabul Zabihollah Mojadedi, or an unnamed senior university official. Education Minister Wardak would move to the Palace's Office of Administrative Affairs (OAA), while MRRD Zia would be given an ambassadorship and his deputy Wais Ahmad Barmak would replace him. He said he would appoint a technically qualified individual as the Minister of Mines, and that Nangarhar Governor Gul Agha Sherzai would be given a position involving the construction of roads in urban areas (Note: it was unclear whether this would be Urban Planning or a new position. End Note.) Karzai said the Ministry of Public Works would go to a qualified engineer with a masters degree from a prestigious U.S. university, while Transportation would go to Junbesh party's Batash (rumored to be a Dostum ally).

¶10. (S) Karzai invited the group's views on placing Commerce Minister Shahrani in the Ministry of Mines. Spanta's endorsement was lukewarm; Ambassador Eikenberry noted Shahrani's extravagant home, suggesting that the Afghans knew best who is corrupt, a concern Karzai shared. Karzai claimed he would split the Ministry of Information and Culture into just the Ministry of Culture and "downgrade" information responsibilities to an agency. He said he wanted Spanta to stay on, but Spanta said he was not interested in a cabinet-level position. Karzai said Jalali was a possible choice for NSA, but claimed that he insisted on keeping his \$13,000/month National Defense University salary. Eikenberry responded that if this were the case, it hardly seemed like a sign of patriotism. Karzai said Atmar was politically "hanging on by a thread" because he was highly disliked for his former communist and excessively pro-Pashtun reputation.

¶11. (S) Karzai said Ismail Khan was still his choice for Minister of Energy, claiming that Secretary Clinton "agreed to a compromise" after Karzai promised to keep Atmar and appoint competent deputy ministers under Khan. Ambassador Eikenberry countered that Secretary Clinton did not endorse Khan -- underscoring that the United States has indicated that Energy and Water is a key U.S. development priority, and that our policy was not to invest in ministries not competently led. Eikenberry added that during his Congressional testimony, all members of the U.S. Congress expressed great concern over the long-term costs of Afghanistan, especially during the current financial crisis.

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If incompetent and corrupt ministers were appointed, it would provide a good reason for them to limit funding. The Ambassador urged Karzai to consider the tradeoffs, and make a decision on what would most benefit the Afghan people and their economic future. He should worry less about pleasing political factions or foreigners, and more on the objective long-term interests of his citizens. Karzai said he would further consider this choice.

2010 Elections

¶12. (S) Karzai mentioned that the 2010 District Council elections could be postponed past 2010, but the Parliamentary elections should only be delayed three to four months. In response to the Ambassador's concerns about addressing the unsustainable electoral calendar that would eventually bankrupt the Afghan government, Karzai replied that he would like to hold a Loya Jirga sometime in the fall of 2010 to resolve these constitutional issues. He referred to "conspiracy theories" he had heard about the international community's intentions in delaying the elections that Eikenberry flatly rejected. The Ambassador said the Afghans would have to make the decision whether to delay the elections or not.

¶13. Admiral Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff did not clear this cable.

EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 09KABUL4070, THE NEW CABINET: BETTER BUT NOT BEST

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL4070	2009-12-19 16:04	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

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OO RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

DE RUEHBUL #4070/01 3531621

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4178

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 KABUL 004070

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 12/19/2019

TAGS PGOV, PREL, AF

SUBJECT: THE NEW CABINET: BETTER BUT NOT BEST

Classified By: Ambassador Ricciardone reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: President Karzai sent most of the cabinet list to the Parliament on December 19 with the notable exception of National Directorate for Security (NDS) Chief Saleh. Although we judge many of the ministers are acceptable and qualified, this list represents only a modest upgrade in Karzai's cabinet talent. It appears Karzai chose ministers based on compromises between the wishes of the international community and the traditional powerbrokers to whom he is beholden to, including Dostum, Mohaqqueq, Ismail Khan, Fahim Khan, Khalili and Sayyaf. Despite the promises to former President (and Abdullah backer) Rabbani, Karzai gave him no positions - increasing the possibility of a more powerful opposition. End Summary.

¶2. (U) First Vice President Fahim Khan announced the following list at the Parliament on December 19: REMAINING:

--Defense - Abdul Rahim Wardak. --Interior - Mohammad Hanif Atmar. --Finance - Mohammad Omer Zakhiwal. --Communication - Engineer Amirzai Sangin. --Justice - Sarwar Danish. --Education - Ghulam Farooq Wardak. --Water and Energy - Al-Haj Mohammad Ismail Khan. --Women's Affairs - Hosun Bano Ghazanfar. --Public Health - Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie. --Agriculture - Asif Rahimi. --Parliamentary Affairs - Mohammad Anwar Jekdalek. --Counternarcotics - General Khodaidad.

REPLACEMENTS:

--Economy - Dr. Anwari Al-Haq Ahadi. --Culture - Sayed Makhdum Raheem. --Higher Education - Obaidullah Obaid. --Commerce - Ghulam Mohammad Elaqi. --Transportation - Dr. Mohammadullah Batash. --Haji & Islamic Affairs - Enayatullah Baligh. --Public Works - Engineer Mirza Hussain Abdullahi. --Mines - Wahidullah Shahrani. --Rural Rehabilitation & Development (MRRD) - Wais Barmak. --Labor and Social Affairs - Mohammad Ismail Munshi. --Border and Tribal Affairs - Hamid Gailani. --Refugees - Enayatullah Nazeri.

NOT ANNOUNCED:

--Foreign Affairs --NDS --Urban Development

Analysis: We Can Work With Most

¶3. (C) The following list includes some background information on each of the selections, to include which political powerbroker supported the candidate, third-country influence (if any), or party affiliation.

REMAINING:

--Defense - Gen. Abdul Rahim Wardak (Pashtun). He was a mujahadeen commander during the Soviet occupation, and later spent over two decades in the Washington, D.C. area. He has political connections to Pir Sayed Ahmad Gailani. Although some say his family has profited from defense contracts, he is considered competent and cooperative with U.S. interests.

--Interior - Mohammad Hanif Atmar (Pashtun). He earned his Master's degree in International Relations and Post-war Development from York University in the UK. He is allegedly a British citizen, and may renounce his citizenship if pressed by the Parliament. He was a loyalist to the Soviet Union-backed government, and his leg was severely injured in an anti-government mujahadeen attack. Many Karzai-supporters do not trust him, particularly the former Northern Alliance. He maintains some political connections with former Interior Minister Jalali and Ashraf Ghani. Karzai told us in early December that "Atmar was hanging on by a thread" because many powerful former mujahadeen like Sayyaf and Ismail Khan did not trust him. The British joined us in supporting him. He is one of the intellectual stars of the cabinet.

--Finance - Mohammad Omer Zakhiwal (Pashtun). He has Canadian citizenship, and most think he is willing to renounce his citizenship if the Afghan Parliament insists. He is associated with Hezb-e-Islami, although not the

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Arghandewal branch. He is close to President Karzai and raised funds for him during the campaign, at times using methods that are not illegal here but not in concert with Western standards. We consider him a skilled technocrat who effectively promotes the economic development of Afghanistan; he is the closest of the "technocrats" to Karzai.

--Communication - Engineer Amirzai Sangin (Pashtun). He earned his Bachelor's degree in Electronics and Communications from the Southern London University. He belongs to the Afghan Millat party and is known to enjoy a close relationship with the Karzai family. He has a well-deserved reputation for competence.

--Justice - Sarwar Danish (Hazara). He is a prolific writer and has published fifteen books on Islamic Jurisprudence, and other legal issues. He is from Daikundi Province, and was born into a pious and religious family. He studied in numerous countries to include Iraq, Syria and Iran. The Wahdat party has told us he is the candidate of Second Vice President Khalili. We have found him approachable, competent, and relatively dedicated to rule of law and human rights.

--Education - Ghulam Farooq Wardak (Pashtun). We consider him an effective minister. However, the press reported widely that he misused his public office and power over schools to support Karzai in the 2009 presidential elections. He is beholden to the Hezb-e-Islami Afghanistan party led by Arghandawal, although he claims he no longer is affiliated. He is close to the President and has been an insightful interlocutor on politics.

--Water and Energy - Al-Haj Mohammad Ismail Khan (Tajik). This former warlord is known for his corruption and ineffectiveness at the Energy Ministry; the worst of Karzai's choices. Presidential Chief of Staff Omer Daudzai told us December 17 that a strong deputy minister would be appointed and he gave us the CV of a western-trained candidate who will manage the ministry. He said some of the water responsibilities could be transferred to Agriculture as another "work around." The establishment of a national power company had already taken away some responsibilities from this position. Our repeated interventions directly with Karzai and his supporters, including a last-minute intervention via Mojaddedi, did not overcome Karzai's deeply personal bonds with Khan. Others think Khan is a signal to the former jihadis that Karzai still stands by them, despite international pressure.

--Women's Affairs - Hosun Bano Ghazanfar (Uzbek). She was supported by the primarily Uzbek Junbesh political party, although they admitted that they did not think she should "account" against their promised four positions. Her performance has disappointed us and female political leaders. Her wealthy and influential family lends her political strength; they own the Ghazanfar Bank, import oil from Russia, Uzbekistan and Iran, and reportedly gave large contributions to Karzai's campaign. She may have been supported by Dostum.

--Public Health - Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie (Pashtun). He is a former doctor and enjoys the support of Upper House Speaker Mojaddedi, and the families associated with Zahir Shah. We consider him one of the most competent and effective ministers. He is a medical doctor and studied in Germany, Pakistan, and the U.S. He was a doctor and professor in various mujahadeen and international organizations during the 80s and 90s.

--Agriculture - Asif Rahimi (Tajik). We find him articulate and competent, but that he does not always deliver on his ambitious goals. He oversaw one of the most successful Afghan Government development initiatives, the National Solidarity Program. He is rumored to be associated with Sayyaf, but is close to Zakhilwal.

--Parliamentary Affairs - Mohammad Anwar Jekdalek (Pashtun). He obtained this position due to his close personal relationship with President Karzai and has proven a valuable Embassy contact. He is a mediocre minister and relatively unknown. He was a former mujahadeen and former chairman of the Afghan Olympic Committee. He survived the Serena Hotel terrorist attack by reportedly dodging a bullet by leaping into a locker in the hotel's gym. He is associated with Fahim Khan.

--Counternarcotics - Gen. Khodaidad (Hazara) will remain for now, although Presidential Chief of Staff Omer Daudzai told Deputy Ambassador Ricciardone December 17 that this ministry would later be dissolved into the Agricultural and Interior

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ministries. He holds graduate degrees from the Indian National Defense Academy. He has been a very good partner for U.S. counternarcotics efforts.

REPLACEMENTS :

--Economy - Dr. Anwari Al-Haq Ahadi (Pashtun). He was the Finance Minister and remains the head of the pro-Pashtun Afghan Millat party. He married Fatima Gailani, the daughter of Pir Sayed Ahmad Gailani, the influential Afghan spiritual leader. He received degrees from the American University of Beirut, and later a doctorate in political science from Northwestern University. He resigned to pursue a presidential bid, but then pulled out shortly after his powerful father-in-law decided to support President Karzai instead. His run as Finance Minister received mixed reviews. He studied in Iran in the 1970s and now professes hostility to the current Iranian regime.

--Culture - Sayed Makhdom Raheen (Tajik). His family is associated with Zahir Shah. Many MPs claim he is too liberal after he was caught on television attending a dance party. He has little support, and may not receive the approval of the conservatives in the Parliament.

--Higher Education - Former Kabul University Medical School Chancellor Obaidullah Obaid (Tajik). Supported by Marshall Fahim. Reportedly competent.

--Commerce - Ghulam Mohammad Elaqi (Hazara). He was the Central Bank Chairman in the 1990s, and former Chamber of Commerce President until 2008. He was allegedly accused of corruption in 2001. His nomination was supported by Mohaqqueq, although he also has a relationship with competing Hazara powerbroker Khalili. Khalili appointed him as a secondary representative at the 2001 Bonn conference. He reportedly owns a factory in Tashkent used to export special bags made from sheep stomach that are used frequently by heroine smugglers to prevent detection. Also, reportedly he took about \$1.5 million from small businessmen in Afghanistan in 1995 to open a trading company, but instead absconded with the funds.

--Transportation - Dr. Mohammadullah Batash (Uzbek). He was previously the Junbesh Party Chairman, and was one of the four names the Junbesh party gave Karzai. He is from Kunduz, and is rumored to maintain a political connection with Dostum. He received his PhD in the former Soviet Union.

--Haji & Islamic Affairs - Enayatullah Baligh (Tajik). He is from Kapisa and is an influential prayer leader at Kabul's main mosque. He was a professor at the Kabul University. He is beholden to Abdul Rassoul Sayyaf.

--Public Works - Engineer Mirza Hussain Abdullahi. He obtained his PhD in Engineering at the University of Hawaii. He is beholden to Khalili, and supported by current Office of Administrative Affairs (OAA) Director Mudaber. According to Daudzai, he was "channeled through Mohaqqueq," and was not one of Mohaqqueq's original choices. His choices were ruled out because they were not qualified.

--Mines - Wahidullah Shahrani (Uzbek). He is the former Minister of Commerce, and his family is from Badakhshan. We consider him one of the most competent ministers. Although an Uzbek, he has no affiliation with the Junbesh party, according to Junbesh Party Chair Nooroolah. His father was once Minister of the Hajj. His family is close to the Karzai family, and he is a UK permanent resident educated in Pakistan and the UK.

--Rural Rehabilitation & Development (MRRD) - Wais Barmak (Tajik). He is currently the deputy in this ministry, and is associated with Marshall Fahim. Daudzai complained about this choice, noting that Barmak was Panjshiri, but he gets high marks for his management of the National Solidarity Program.

--Labor and Social Affairs - Mohammad Ismail Munshi (Turkmen). He is one of the Deputy Chairmen of the Junbesh party. He is associated with Dostum.

--Border and Tribal Affairs - Hamid Gailani (Pashtun). He is a moderate Pashtun and currently is the Deputy Speaker of the Upper House of the Afghan National Assembly. He obtains most of his political power from his respected father, Pir Sayed Ahmad Gailani. Although pro-Karzai in the last election, he can be highly critical of the Afghan President. He maintains a good relationship with the Embassy.

--Refugees - Enayatullah Nazeri (Tajik). He is from Parwan

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Province and studied law and political science at the Kabul University. He was a respected civil servant and is viewed as relatively apolitical; he served in the Najibullah, Rabbani, Taliban, and the post-Bonn interim governments. He was the first Minister of Refugee Affairs from 2002-3. His nomination was supported by Fahim Khan.

NOT ANNOUNCED

¶4. (C) President Karzai has made no announcement about his advisors, his Chief of Staff, the Foreign Affairs Minister, NDS, the OAA, the Independent Directorate for Local Governance (IDLG), the National Security Advisor, and the Minister for Urban Development. Presidential Chief of Staff Omer Daudzai told Deputy Ambassador Ricciardone on December 17 that FM Spanta would stay on until after the January 28 London conference; he implied that the current NSA Rassoul will likely take his place. Spanta would have a difficult time obtaining Parliamentary approval due to his dual (German) citizenship, his name on the list of corrupt officials given to the Parliament by the Deputy Attorney General on December 16, and because Spanta received a vote of no confidence in the Parliament in the past. NSA and IDLG were not announced today because those positions do not require Parliament's approval. Daudzai said the IDLG Ministry would remain with Jelani Popal (Pashtun), who is considered to be a technocrat.

¶5. (C) It was unusual that NDS Saleh was not announced with the others, as both Karzai and his Chief of Staff have told us on numerous occasions that he would stay on. At one point, Sayyaf was reportedly applying significant pressure on Karzai to give the job to the previous Border and Tribal Affairs Minister Assadullah Khalid, who is exceptionally corrupt and incompetent. Karzai told Ambassador Eikenberry that a new Construction Ministry (taking functions from Urban Development and Public Works) would be created and given to the current Governor of Nangarhar Gul Aqa Sherzai. Sherzai has indicated separately to us that he plans to stay on as governor, which may be why the Urban Development Minister was left off the list. (Daudzai told us Yusuf Pashtun, a former Urban Development Minister, will become the next Minister of Urban Development.)

¶6. (C) The Parliament debated extensively whether or not President Karzai had the right to divide, add, or change Ministries without their approval. Lower House Speaker Yunus Qanooni and former presidential candidate Bashardost noted in the plenary on December 19 that the approval of one-third of the Parliament was required to reorganize ministerial functions according to the constitution, although after he received a call from the Presidential Palace during the plenary Qanooni said splitting ministries was acceptable. Taj Ali Saber, Karzai's nomination for the new Ministry of Martyrs and Disabled, was not allowed to be presented to the Parliament for this reason (this used to be part of the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry).

Analysis: Political Debts and Balance

¶7. (C) Of the selections announced to date, 13 of the 24 are holdovers. Former President Rabbani was engaged in intensive negotiations with Karzai for weeks but got none of his supporters a ministry - which may lead to a stronger opposition if he rejoins Abdullah's movement. One UNAMA analyst noted that Rabbani's faction had tried hardest for the two security ministries (Defense and Interior) but that Karzai had shown "strength" in keeping the two ministers in place. Karzai did not feel himself bound to a "coalition" or powersharing arrangement with Rabbani, who clearly overshot in his post-election negotiations.

¶8. (C) The biggest initial winners include first Vice President Fahim, who delivered significant numbers of Tajik voters and according to our estimates received five seats for his supporters. Dostum, whose Uzbek supporters pushed Karzai's victory, comes in second with three positions. Other winners include Mohaqqueq (Karzai split the Hazara vote with Bashardost) with two; the prestigious Gailani family - 2.5 (Ahadi, Hamed Gailani's brother in law, is "half Gailani, half Afghan Millat"); Afghan Millat - 1.5; Khalili - 1; Ismail Khan - 1; Mojaddedi - .5 (Fatimie is considered "half Mojaddedi, half the former King Shah family"); Shah Family - 1.5; Hezb-e-Islami - 2; and Sayyaf - 1. Atmar, Rahimi, Shahrani and Khodaidad were not considered to be any particular groups' candidate, although all receive some international support.

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EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 09KABUL4150, ABOVE THE LAW: CORRUPT GOVERNOR THWARTS GOVERNANCE

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL4150	2009-12-27 11:11	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4315

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 KABUL 004150

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SRAP, SCA/FO, SCA/A, EUR/RPM, INR/B

STATE PASS USAID FOR ASIA/SCAA

USFOR-A FOR POLAD

EO 12958 DECL: 12/27/2019

TAGS KDEM, PGOV, PINR, KDEMAF, AF

SUBJECT: ABOVE THE LAW: CORRUPT GOVERNOR THWARTS GOVERNANCE

AND DEVELOPMENT IN PAKTYA PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN

REF: KABUL 1345

Classified By: Interagency Provincial Affairs Deputy Director Hoyt Yee for Reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: Paktya Governor Juma Khan Hamdard has the skills and charisma to be a successful politician. However, his Hezb-i-Islami Gulbuddin (HiG) connections, alleged meddling in political affairs in Balkh Province, leadership of a province-wide corruption scheme, and suspected contacts with insurgents make him detrimental to the future of Afghanistan. Through an investigation of corruption involving a local (Afghan) engineer assigned to the U.S.-led Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in the province, Patkya's National Directorate of Security (NDS) Chief informs that Hamdard is the

central point of a vast corruption network involving the provincial chief of police and several Afghan ministry line directors. Alleged skimming of USG development funds occurs at four stages of a project: when contractors bid on a project, at application for building permits, during construction, and at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. These allegations of corruption hamper USG relations with GIROA officials, as well as contractors, and are being reviewed by U.S. Embassy law enforcement officials. As with other corruption cases, a major challenge to successful prosecution will be the Afghan legal system's limited institutional capacity -- the Major Crimes Task Force (MCTF) currently has four vetted prosecutors and a limited number of vetted investigators to work this and numerous other pending corruption cases from all over the country. End Summary.

GOVERNOR'S PEDIGREE AS HiG COMMANDER

¶2. (S) Governor Hamdard was born in 1954 and is an ethnic Pashtun from Balkh Province. He is a member of the Wardak tribe from Mazar-i-Sharif. He supposedly completed high school, but has poor reading and writing skills. During the war with the Soviets, Hamdard fought under Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's leadership and was a HiG commander. In 1994, he fought with General Dostum against the Taliban until he defected to the Taliban's side and assisted in their victory over Dostum in 1997-98. Following the U.S.-led coalition's invasion in 2001, Hamdard rejoined Dostum's forces, although relations were uneasy. Following the war, he served as Number 8 Corps Commander in Balkh. Hamdard was later appointed governor of Baghlan and then Jowzjan provinces. He became governor of Paktya in December 2007. Hamdard also is one of President Karzai's Tribal Advisors. He is affiliated with Hezb-i-Islami Afghanistan (HiA), a political party, and is its leader in northern Afghanistan. Sensitive reporting indicates that Hamdard is still serving as a HiG commander and leads a faction of HiG fighters in the north. He often signs memos with the military title "Lieutenant General."

¶3. (C) In Paktya, Hamdard has shown himself to be a very charismatic leader. Nevertheless, he spends more time outside the province than in it, leaving most governance responsibilities to Deputy Governor Abdul Rahman Mangal. Prior to the August 2009 elections, he stated on several occasions to U.S. representatives that he expected to leave Paktya for a governorship in another province or a national position following the elections. Rumors in Gardez and Jalalabad place him as a top candidate for the governor of Nangarhar. (Comment. As Nangarhar's governor, he would have access to significant revenues generated at the Torkham Gate border crossing with Pakistan. End comment.)

THREATENING THE USE OF FORCE DURING ELECTION CAMPAIGNING

¶4. (C) During the pre-election period for both the August 20 elections and the subsequent planned run-off, Hamdard spent a significant amount of time

outside of Paktya reportedly campaigning for President Karzai. According to Afghan and international press, his activities in Balkh Province during this period created potential for armed conflict. Abdullah Abdullah supporters claimed that Hamdard abused his government position by campaigning in the northern provinces and distributing weapons to Balkh's Pashtun districts in order to destabilize the province. Hamdard denied these charges and armed clashes were avoided because the run-off was canceled, but his activities in Balkh demonstrated the strong support base that he continues to maintain in the north.

UNDER INVESTIGATION FOR 2007 DEATHS OF DEMONSTRATORS

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¶5. (C) Hamdard's own comments on his governorship in Paktya leave the impression he was "banished" to this southeastern province. In May 2007 he was forced to resign as governor of Jowzjan when thousands demonstrated against him. Forces under his command shot at demonstrators in the Uzbek town of Shibirghan, killing thirteen and injuring more than thirty, reportedly further straining relations with Dostum because many of the demonstrators were Junbesh party members and Dostum supporters. XXXXXXXXXXXXX informed us that the Ministry of the Interior Administration Deputy requested his assistance in arresting Governor Hamdard and bringing him to trial for the charges. No action has been taken to carry out this request.

CENTER OF PAKTYA CORRUPTION SCHEME

¶6. (S) On August 23, the Paktya office of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) arrested PRT Paktya's local national engineer Jawid Khairudeen, an Afghan citizen, for engaging in corrupt contract practices. Investigations surrounding the Jawid case reveal an extensive network of corruption throughout the province of which Hamdard and his Office Director/Chief of Staff Hashmatullah Yousifi are allegedly at the center. Paktya NDS Chief Ali Ahmad Mubaraz and eyewitnesses have accused Hamdard of soliciting bribes from contractors by having contractors arrested at job sites and held until the bribes are paid. NDS also accuses Hamdard of being an active member of Hezb-e-Islami Gulbuddin (HiG) in Balkh Province, funneling money he receives from bribes and smuggling (drugs and jewels) to HiG operations in his home province of Balkh. He allegedly has illicit contacts with insurgents in Parwan, Kunar, and Kabul provinces, as well as Pakistani intelligence (ISI) and Iranian (affiliation unknown, possibly IRGC) operatives, through his business in Dubai; he is allegedly a business partner with Gulbaddin Hekmatyr's son in Dubai. Evidence collected in the case points to corruption involving U.S. funds and actively undermining GIRA counter-insurgency policy.

¶7. (C) On October 29 XXXXXXXXXXXXX came to Forward Operating Base Gardez to speak with the PRT about corruption in Governor Hamdard's office. According to XXXXXXXXXXXXX, there are four opportunities at the provincial level for illegally skimming USG funds during the life cycle of a PRT development project: the first is during the bidding/selection process. At this stage Afghan ministry line directors, who are part of the contractor selection process, receive payments to rig the scores assigned to contractors so that they will receive the highest scores and qualify for the contract. The second opportunity occurs when the contractor requests a permit to start work. The Governor's signature is needed for the permit, so payments are made to intermediaries to secure the governor's signature. The third occasion occurs during the quality assessment/quality control (QA/QC) process. At this stage, workers may be arrested at the construction site and held until the requesting QA/QC government official is paid a bribe; the other possibility is that the contractor must pay off the public works official conducting QA/QC on the project in order to receive a positive report. The final opportunity for graft occurs at the ribbon-cutting ceremony where significant sums of money are sometimes passed during the gift-giving part of the ceremony.

STRONG SENSE OF IMPUNITY

¶8. (C) Based on evidence collected, Hamdard and his accomplices allegedly act with complete impunity, blatantly placing themselves above the law. Contractors have informed the PRT that Hamdard told them he does not care about possible repercussions of his corrupt practices "because he's under investigation already;" if contractors "complain to the PRT about him, he will have them chained and dragged to his office." Adding salt to the wound, on October 19, the Governor called PRT leadership and the maneuver commander to his office to confront them with an e-mail Hamdard obtained in which a PRT officer asked a contractor constructing border police checkpoints questions about corruption involving Paktya's chief of police and Hamdard. (Note: The e-mail was apparently leaked to Hamdard although he stated he received it from a GIROA source. End Note.) During the meeting Hamdard waxed indignant and, in a memo dated soon after,

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proscribed ministerial line directors from meeting further with UNAMA or PRT officials, or answering queries from them. Word has consequently spread about the corruption investigations; and interlocutors are reluctant to talk to NDS and Coalition Forces representatives -- many stating that their lives are threatened.

COMMENT

¶9. (C) Allegations of corruption surrounding Governor Hamdard have come from all quarters including the private sector, public employees, and

XXXXXXXXXXXX. Afghans throughout the province generally regard him as corrupt. Hamdard's ham-fisted approach to intimidate international partners and the PRT, while not an admission of guilt, illustrates his contempt for the international donor community, GIROA, the lawful processes for development within ministry line directories in particular, and the rule of law. His reported statement that he wants to "declare a jihad against the PRT" is illustrative of the strained relations with the PRT. Somewhat fortunately, Governor Hamdard is often away in Kabul or Balkh Province and Deputy Governor Mangal is a capable administrator and thoughtful intermediary.

¶10. (C) If Hamdard's case comes to trial, his political influence and HIG ties make it possible or perhaps likely that corruption among other high-ranking government officials in the Province and beyond will be exposed. The PRT has briefed this case to the embassy via appropriate channels and will share the investigative documentation to date. U.S. law enforcement officers based in Kabul will work with the Afghan Attorney General's office to develop this case further. As with other corruption cases, a major challenge to successful prosecution will be the Afghan legal system's limited institutional capacity. The Major Crimes Task Force (MCTF) currently has four vetted prosecutors and a limited number of vetted investigators to work this and numerous other pending corruption cases from all over the country. 11. (U) This message was drafted at the Paktya PRT in Gardez. RICCIARDONE

Viewing cable 09KABUL4182, PERVASIVE CORRUPTION UNDERMINING GHAZNI PROVINCE'S

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL4182	2009-12-28 15:03	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4339

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 KABUL 004182

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SRAP, SCA/FO, SCA/A, EUR/RPM, INR/B
STATE PASS USAID FOR ASIA/SCAA
USFOR-A FOR POLAD

EO 12958 DECL: 12/19/2019

TAGS PGOV, PREL, AF

SUBJECT: PERVASIVE CORRUPTION UNDERMINING GHAZNI PROVINCE

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

REF: A. (A) KABUL 4088 B. (B) KABUL 2807

Classified By: Interagency Provincial Affairs Coordinator Scott Kilner for
Reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

1.(C) SUMMARY: In recent weeks Ghazni Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) leadership engaged Afghan provincial and district government officials, law enforcement commanders, and civil society representatives on the extent and nature of corruption in the area. A graphic picture of criminal enterprise masquerading as public administration emerged. The consistency and scope of explicit and detailed allegations lends veracity to charges that pervasive corruption defrauds the people of meaningful government services and significantly undermines popular support for the Afghan government (GIROA). Credible sources indicate that some of the most senior government officials in the province have chronically engaged in significant corrupt acts: embezzling public funds, stealing humanitarian assistance, and misappropriating government property, among others. The law enforcement resources needed in Ghazni and at the national level to address corruption effectively are lacking, and building that capacity will take time. In the meantime, the PRT will work with the Embassy to develop non-judicial mechanisms to bring greater civil service reform, budget and programmatic transparency, and non-judicial forms of accountability to address systemic corruption. End Summary.

GOVERNMENT AS CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE?

2. (C) In recent weeks the Ghazni Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) engaged extensively with provincial and district-level government officials, law enforcement commanders, and civil society representatives regarding the scope and nature of corruption in Ghazni Province. This report includes those examples of recent and possibly on-going corrupt practices that were raised by multiple, credible senior GIROA officials in Ghazni Province. Most individuals the PRT spoke with were willing to speak openly about corruption in the province; many are well aware of the push by the international

community to root out corruption, and may have their own motivations in highlighting corruption by others officials and minimizing attention to themselves. XXXXXXXXXXXXX even provided a written summary of information contained in NDS files. These conversations paint a picture of criminal enterprise masquerading as public administration in Ghazni. Although the PRT has no capacity to confirm the allegations raised, the consistency of reports alleging corruption among senior government officials is striking. Long-standing criminal operations centered on Deh Yak District Governor Hajji Fazil, Ghazni City Mayor Hakimullah Ghazniwal, Meshrano Jirga member and Tajik community leader Mawlana Abdul Rahman, and Director of Reconstruction and Rural Development Sanai Mayel -- with significant involvement by current Ghazni Governor Usman Usmani.

THE GHAZNI ARBAKAI

¶3. (C) XXXXXXXXXXXXX informed us that Governor Usmani and some district governors embezzled funds intended to pay local Afghan "Arbakai" security forces who worked during the election period securing polling sites. (Per reftel B, community based security payments were problematic in many provinces, and there was little transparency relating to the payment mechanisms.) According to these sources, approximately USD 160,000 was dispatched from the Presidential Palace to Governor Usmani to pay the Arbakai. XXXXXXXXXXXXX stated that Usmani kept approximately USD 100,000, dividing the rest between the district governors of Deh Yak, Giro, Zanakhan, Gelan, Qarabah, Ab Band, Moqur, and Ghazni City. XXXXXXXXXXXXX said these district governors submitted fictitious lists of Arbakai from their districts and have not distributed any of the payments. (Comment: Considering the general lack of security in these districts, with the exception of Ghazni City and parts of Qarabagh, and our assumption that little or no voting actually took place there on election day, we doubt there were any Arbakai working in these districts in the first place. End Comment.) XXXXXXXXXXXXX similarly affirmed that no payments were disbursed there to pay 50 legitimate Arbakai.

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MISAPPROPRIATING REFUGEE LAND

¶4. (C) According to both XXXXXXXXXXXXX, Afghan government officials appropriated land in 2005 outside Ghazni to create a "returnee village," where refugees and Internally Displace Persons (IDP) originally from Ghazni could return and receive a small plot of land on which to build a home. XXXXXXXXXXXXX The commission divided the land up into four large sections, each consisting of many small plots. Two of the sections are on a hill and are generally undesirable as real estate, while the other two sections are flat land nearer Ghazni city and ideal for building and development. Most of the land in the flat sections was given to government officials, their relatives -- some of whom were minors, and fictitious refugees. Allegedly,

they were later sold for profit. The report of XXXXXXXXXXXXX was sent to then-Chief Prosecutor of Ghazni, who appointed a team to investigate cases which included the director of refugees and the deputy governor. No indictment was ever issued. XXXXXXXXXXXXX confirmed that these allegations are largely true.

THE WHEAT HEIST

¶5. (C) According toXXXXXXXXXXXX, senior government officials have long corrupted the World Food Program's (WFP) emergency wheat shipments and Work for Food Program. According to these sources, the governor, RRD line director, and certain district governors are engaged in a scheme to divert WFP wheat and other food items to the black market to be sold. Part of the scheme involves pocketing the money from WFP to pay for transport of the wheat, thus providing the RRD director an excuse to tell the farther out, predominantly Hazara districts that he cannot deliver because he cannot pay for transportation. The Governor allegedly signs transportation contracts, but the wheat is sold and the money embezzled.

¶6. (C) Former Zanakhan District Governor Mohammed Hassan was arrested attempting to sell a shipment and released on order from the governor. (Note: Ref A reports on Mohammed Hassan, who was fired as District Governor of Qarabagh district after he was arrested and charged with rape in the spring 2009; he was released under questionable circumstances and secured an appointment from Governor Usmani as District governor of Zanakhan. Hassan was fired from this post on December 2. End Note.) According to sources, Deh Yak District Governor Hajji Fazil also sold wheat intended for 1,788 families in Deh Yak. Provincial Reconstruction Team officials also recently prevented RRD from diverting wheat intended for Ajiristan District to Qarabagh, where the suspicion was it would either have been sold by the district governor or police chief, or "intercepted" by the insurgency.

CHROMITE SMUGGLING TO PAKISTAN, CONTRACTOR SHAKE-DOWNS, PERSONAL ENRICHMENT

¶7. (C) According to XXXXXXXXXXXXX, Governor Usmani has long been running a chromite smuggling operation into Pakistan from mines in Zanakhan District, as well as Wardak and Logar Provinces, sending his personal security force to escort trucks carrying chromite so they can pass Highway One checkpoints without inspection. According to XXXXXXXXXXXXX, the chromite trafficking is arranged by Hajji Pacha Han, an Usmani associate from Kandahar who lives in the Governor's official residence. XXXXXXXXXXXXX said, for example, that Usmani and Hajji Fazil intervened early this year when eight trucks carrying chromite were seized by the NDS in Ghazni. According to XXXXXXXXXXXXX, Usmani and Fazil secured the release of the trucks and the detained smuggler, Hajji Ibrahim. XXXXXXXXXXXXX

¶8. (C) XXXXXXXXXXXXX informed Task Force representatives that Governor Usmani and RRD Director Mayel extort bribes and kickbacks from local

businesses and PRT contractors. A simple "shake-down," they allege, entails contractors who must pay a bribe to obtain official approvals; harassment for not paying includes having workers chased off job sites by armed men, sometimes by uniformed members of the ANP, is also common.

¶9. (C) Most credible interlocutors also assert that Governor Usmani and his accomplices in GIROA routinely embezzle government funds and international aid money intended for public administration and humanitarian assistance. According to XXXXXXXXXXXXX, the governor receives 1.4 million Afghanis per month for administrative and representational expenses, but pockets it; additionally, he allegedly received kickbacks from vendors for official purchases. XXXXXXXXXXXXX admitted to the PRT that he similarly funds personal living expenses in Ghazni city.

COMMENT

¶10. (C) It is difficult to imagine sustainable gains in security, governance, and development agendas without addressing the pervasive corruption that plagues Ghazni's public administration. The foundation of security and governance strategy in Ghazni, as in Afghanistan as a whole, requires popular acceptance of and support for GIROA authority. Obtaining such support is very unlikely given the current situation -- where sub-national government officials' attitude toward citizens is largely predatory. PRT efforts in Ghazni have been focused on bringing GIROA officials back to Pashtun districts where they have been absent for years. It is becoming increasingly difficult, however, to convince local Pushtuns that GIROA presence and development programs portend stability and prosperity. The venality of provincial administration instead turns historical Pushtun skepticism of central government authority into outright hostility. Ongoing and new efforts to link the population of Ghazni to legitimate governance -- short, concerted, and effective efforts to root out corruption -- will pose significant challenges.

¶11. (C) On their own, dismayed provincial law enforcement and judicial institutions are clearly unwilling and incapable of dealing with the scope of corruption they face. Ghazni's provincial ANP and NDS chiefs want to clean up public administration, but admit they remain powerless to tackle the most egregious corruption cases. Senior government officials act with impunity; minor officials use bribery and political influence to avoid prosecution. XXXXXXXXXXXXX is blunt about the road ahead: XXXXXXXXXXXXX. Mindful of the above, the impetus and resources needed to address provincial corruption in the near-term must come from outside Ghazni. XXXXXXXXXXXXX The Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) of the Major Crimes Task Force, which itself is limited in terms of the number of vetted prosecutors, investigators, and judges, has yet to extend its reach into the provinces; a system of effective and direct anti-corruption mechanisms is largely lacking within the international community.

¶12. (C) While public corruption in Ghazni appears pervasive in scope, it lacks significant complexity; much is considered an open secret. Consequently, effective legal action would not require years of work by skilled investigators -- short-term assignment of the right mix of Afghan prosecutorial staff and supporting ANP and NDS investigators, as well as USG mentors, could be sufficient to break the criminal cycle of corruption in Ghazni. However, a major challenge to successful legal action by the GIROA will be the Afghan legal system's limited institutional capacity. The Major Crimes Task Force (MCTF) currently has four vetted prosecutors and a limited number of vetted investigators to numerous pending corruption cases from all over the country. As a result, the PRT and Task Force will work with the Embassy to develop not only investigative and prosecution tools, but also non-judicial mechanisms to bring greater civil service reform, budget and programmatic transparency, and non-judicial forms of accountability to address systemic corruption. Trusted interlocutors in Ghazni, as is the case elsewhere in Afghanistan, provide us insight into the activities of nefarious government officials, but they do so at considerable risk to themselves, their families, and associates. Should we not quickly develop mechanisms to root out the current corrupt practices and take a firm stand in Ghazni where corruption is rampant, corrupt government officials will be emboldened and the population further alienated. 13. (U) This message was drafted by PRT Ghazni. RICCIARDONE

Viewing cable 10KABUL62, A TALE OF TWO KABUL MAYORS

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
10KABUL62	2010-01-07 13:01	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET//NOFORN	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO3557
OO RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL
DE RUEHBUL #0062/01 0071320
ZNY SSSSS ZZH (ADX08F306 MSI7676 532A)
O 071320Z JAN 10 ZDS
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4590
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 000062

C O R R E C T E D COPY (HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS)

NOFORN

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/05/2020

TAGS: FBI JUS PGOV PINR PREL

SUBJECT: A TALE OF TWO KABUL MAYORS

REF: 09 KABUL 4066

KABUL 00000062 001.4 OF 002

Classified By: Polcouns Annie Pforzheimer, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. Summary: (C) President Karzai has appointed a new mayor of Kabul, Engineer Mohammad Yunos Novandish. This follows the December 7, 2009 'mismanagement of authority' conviction and the December 8, 2009 release pending appeal of former Kabul Mayor Abdul Ahad Sahebi (Reftel.) The Novandish appointment portends controversy because he is not from Kabul; the Sahebi case suggests kangaroo court justice. Bio information on Novandish is in paras 3 and 4. End Summary.

New Mayor - Old Ties

¶2. (C) President Karzai issued a January 3 decree appointing Engineer Mohammad Yunos Novandish the new mayor of Kabul. Controversy over the appointment may arise for two reasons: First, according to Article 141 of the Constitution, mayors shall be elected, not appointed. Some Afghan MPs went on TOLO TV January 5 to challenge the appointment on constitutional grounds. Second, according to embassy contacts among the

National Democratic Front (NDF), Mayor Novandish is not a native Kabuli and the NDF is planning to try and organize protests within the month. (Note: The NDF is a loosely organized coalition of urban civil society groups and members of parliament.)

¶3. (U) According to media reports and embassy contacts, Novandish, an Uzbek from Saripol, graduated from the engineering faculty of Kabul Polytechnic University in civil engineering and did post-graduate studies in the Ukraine. He served as a lecturer at Balkh University from 1994 to 1996, lived primarily in Central Asia during the Taliban years, and was Deputy Minister of Water and Energy from 2004-2006. Novandish resigned his post when Ismail Khan was appointed Minister of Water and Energy. After 2006 he worked as a consultant for USAID-funded programs such as International Development Relief and Development, Inc. (IRD) and Advanced Engineering Institute Associates (AEIA). In 2009 he opened his own engineering firm, Energy and Power Construction Company, which has allegedly done extensive subcontracting work in the energy sector. (Note: alternate transliterations of his name include Noandesh, Novandesh, and Nawandaish.)

¶4. (S/NF) Sensitive reporting indicates that warlord and leader of the Junbesh Party General Dostum pushed Novandish for the Kabul Mayor appointment. Although Novandish claims publicly that he is politically independent, this reported Dostum support has credibility given that Novandish was Deputy Minister of Water and Energy when current MP and Junbesh Party member Shakar Kargar (Uzbek, Jowzjan) was Minister. Kargar reportedly owed his own ministerial appointment at that time to Dostum. Although Kargar is an intra-party rival of Dostum, they often unite to further party interests. Dostum has been publicly vocal in his

criticism of the January 2 ministerial confirmation process in which all three Junbesh nominees were rejected. The appointment of an apparent Dostum supporter to the mayor's office may well be President Karzai's attempt to placate Dostum and Junbesh.

Old Mayor - Yesterday's News

¶5. (C) Media coverage of the new mayor's appointment has included condemnation of his predecessor, Abdul Ahad Sahebi, for "massive embezzlement of funds and brazen misuse of authority." The ex-mayor's December 7 conviction and almost immediate release from jail on bail pending appeal generated a media frenzy and intense speculation over President Karzai's role in Sahebi's release. (Reftel.) USG officials met with Sahebi on December 25, 2009 and January 2 and 3, ¶2010. Sahebi produced the December 6 summons he received to appear at primary court and obtain a date for his preliminary hearing. Sahebi contended that normal procedure requires a minimum of 5 days between summons and hearing date, but when he presented himself to the court on December 7, his lawyer was handed not a hearing date, but his sentence - four years in jail and a USD 16,000 fine.

¶6. (C) Concerning the actual charge of poor oversight of contracting authority, Sahebi laid out his version of the case: In 2007 Sahebi's predecessor signed a one-year contract leasing some city property to two individuals who had shops on the site. When the contract came up for renewal, the City Hall financial department assigned three people to study the continued use of the land. The financial department recommended the contract be renewed, with mention

of the city's future plans for the site. Sahebi's deputy

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signed the renewal. Three months later, a higher bid for the site came in. Had that bid been accepted, the city would have gained about USD 16,000 more for the lease and this "loss" was the basis of the case against him. Embassy officials have not been privy to the prosecution's case against Sahebi.

¶7. (C) Regarding his job performance, Sahebi also mentioned to USG officials that in his less than two years as mayor he had found files for approximately 32,000 applicants who paid for non-existent plots of land in Kabul city. He said he ordered a halt to the distribution of residential and commercial land until claims could be sorted out and invalidated the illegal claims of some important people like Engineer Ahmed Shah, who is close to the fundamentalist former warlord MP, Rasoul Sayyaf (Pashtun, Kabul). This claim supports information reported reftel that some of Sahebi's official decisions may have antagonized powerful people who then sought to use the power of the state to discredit him.

Karzai's Motives Still Unclear

¶8. (C) Comment: Metaphorically speaking (there is no jury trial in Afghanistan) the jury is still out on Sahebi, the first high-profile case of official corruption following Karzai's re-election. Sahebi's case is on appeal, but no hearing date has been set. Unfortunately for the former mayor, he has already been tried in the press and condemned

as an embezzler, a charge that apparently was not even brought and for which we have seen no evidence. As for the formal process itself, it appears that Sahebi may have been convicted without having been accorded what little due process there is under Afghan law.

¶9. (C) The Novandish appointment may indicate that Karzai concluded, despite his initial forceful defense of Sahebi, that it was more politically expedient to sacrifice him. Karzai may hope both to satisfy international expectations that he will act to clean up his government and at the same time to placate powerful Afghan players who wanted the ex-mayor gone for their own mercenary reasons. End Comment.

EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 10KABUL85, KARZAI AND CODEL MCCAIN ON PROGRESS, ELECTIONS,

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
10KABUL85	2010-01-10 09:09	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO4216
OO RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL
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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4615
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 KABUL 000085

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 01/10/2020

TAGS PGOV, PREL, AF

SUBJECT: KARZAI AND CODEL MCCAIN ON PROGRESS, ELECTIONS,
AND REINTEGRATION

Classified By: Ambassador Karl Eikenberry, Reasons. 1.4 (B) and (D)

¶1. (S) Summary: In a positive and free-ranging discussion, President Karzai and visiting CODEL McCain agreed that more should be done to tell Afghans and Americans about the progress in Afghanistan since 2002 and the positive role of the international community. On the timing of parliamentary elections Karzai held firmly to 2010 but conceded that a few months could, and probably should, be added to the projected date of May 22. He explained the parameters of Afghanistan's projected reintegration program, promising that it would be unveiled before the January 28 London conference, and consulting with the CODEL on the right way to gain U.S. acceptance of the plan. The CODEL and Karzai discussed the situation in Pakistan and potential for violence that would affect Afghanistan. End summary.

¶2. (U) CODEL McCain (Senator McCain (R-AZ), Senator Joseph Lieberman (D-CT), Senator John Thune (R-SD) and Senator John Barroso (R-WY)) met with President Karzai and his senior security leadership, including the Ministers of Defense, Interior and Foreign Affairs, as well as National Security Advisor Rassoul, on January 6, accompanied by Ambassador Eikenberry, Deputy Ambassador Ricciardone, and COMISAF McChyrstal.

The Bad Old Days ... And The Better New Ones

¶3. (S) Karzai and the CODEL, who maintained a positive mood throughout the meeting and a dinner immediately following, discussed the American political debate over the health care bill and what Karzai termed the "unbelievable" status of uninsured Americans. Karzai told McCain that he'd been "inspired" by McCain's gracious November 2008 concession speech and that "if it had not been for that speech I would not have accepted a second round" in the recent Presidential elections. Karzai added that his acceptance of the second round ("even though I know I had won") would be what he was remembered for in Afghan history; McCain said Karzai had been in his thoughts during that difficult period.

¶4. (S) McCain and Lieberman reminded Karzai that they had met in a tent at Bagram Airbase in January 2002, with flashlights instead of electricity; all

three mentioned the "treasured" bilateral relationship and tremendous accomplishments in Afghanistan over the past eight years. "In 2001 Kabul was in darkness and misery; now it is amazing and vibrant," Karzai said. At another point he noted that it was "wrong" to make statements that the Bush Administration had only made mistakes; there had been real development during those years. As one example, he said, he had been given a list of women to consider for his next Cabinet nomination slate - having such a list shows progress from just five years ago.

¶5. (S) The CODEL noted that President Obama's December 1 speech on the Afghanistan strategy had brought about a more favorable U.S. opinion about the war and our goals here, and a recognition that "a threat to you is a threat to us." Karzai responded that while he was somewhat concerned with any discussion of end dates he had publicly emphasized to the Afghan people that we "have to do this for ourselves" and continue the "struggle against terrorism."

¶6. (S) In view of the need to do more to tell both Afghans and Americans about what is going right in Afghanistan, Karzai noted his extremely positive impression of his January 2 trip to Helmand, accompanied by COMISAF McChrystal. He said that it had been his "best trip in seven years" and McCain noted that the trip had been covered by U.S. media, reinforcing the positive message. Karzai complained, mildly, that while he knew that media statements were out of our direct control, U.S. leaders should also make statements that recognize Afghan progress. "We will get the army and other institutions built, even if there are setbacks," he said, but it is vitally important that we "bring back" a sense of shared purpose. Afghanistan had seen incredible developments in education and the treatment of women, Senator Thune said, noting the particular potential of agriculture. Karzai agreed but pointed out that climate change was a new and growing concern - at this point in the year there should be abundant snow and there had been none to date.

Elections: Confidence-Building

¶7. (S) Karzai linked the issue of Afghan perceptions to elections by saying "progress is there but confidence isn't" among the people because they hear rumors of an election delay that would undermine the constitution. He said that

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"talk in diplomatic circles" is of an election delay which makes the Afghan people "extremely frightened." A delay would be a "dangerous" opening that the Taliban would exploit, he said, and "pleaded" with the CODEL to help him. Senator Lieberman emphasized that this was an Afghan decision, but pointed out the security issues involved. Karzai responded that then-President Bush had asked him two years ago to delay the Presidential elections until 2010 and he had refused since such a delay by the sitting President would amount to a coup. This applies again to Parliament (NFI) and

“if we’d had a second round I’d be less worried now” (because he would have a more certain mandate from the people.)

¶8. (S) Conceding that a few months’ delay would not engender the same fear and uncertainty, Karzai said that although he could announce a delay, he had to do so in a way that would “convince” the people that elections really will occur. “The MPs want to stay in their jobs, but the country would suffer” if the delay were indefinite, he said. Lieberman agreed, noting that President Obama’s message had also emphasized the importance of democracy in Afghanistan and that comparison of the Taliban’s approach to democracy with Karzai’s was “night to day”. Senator Barroso pointed out that in a second term the “clock starts to tick” and asked Karzai how he would contribute even further to Afghan democracy. Karzai replied that his two contributions would be being the first Afghan leader to hand over power peacefully to his democratically-elected successor and defeating terrorism.

Peace and Reintegration

¶9. (S) Karzai noted that the peace process and reintegration efforts help in the fight against the Taliban by working with those who are willing to come back, especially the “foot soldiers”. Reconciliation would extend to more senior level Taliban (not Mullah Omar, he clarified) who are not linked to Al Qaeda, “some of whom are willing” to talk. Lots of contacts are taking place, Karzai said, but no common reconciliation policy has emerged. McCain noted that for this to be successful the other side should be convinced they can’t win and this should probably be timed to work with the new influx of troops now underway. He agreed that those fighting for reasons other than ideology should be helped to return and that the fight should continue against the ideologically-motivated Taliban, stressing the importance of educating the country that both efforts were ongoing at the same time.

¶10. (S) Lieberman pressed him to explain the concept of offering incentives to the Taliban, and emphasized that this outreach could be problematic if it’s not explained right to the American people and the importance of Karzai articulating his plan before the U.S. could support it. The “carrot and stick” aspect (rewarding those who want to end their allegiance, punishing those who abuse human rights and embrace terrorism) has to be understood, Lieberman said. Karzai said he was currently revising the methods and would soon announce a strategy in which sub-commanders might be induced to reintegrate into Afghan society but reconciliation would need Pakistan to end its support for high-level Taliban. Later in the conversation, Karzai said he could refer to American history and the “lenient” terms extended to members of the Confederate Army, including General Robert E. Lee, when they surrendered after the Civil War.

¶11. (S) Karzai asked the CODEL how the U.S. Congress will receive this plan, to which McCain said it would be supported in view of the success of the comparable Anbar Awakening in Iraq. Lieberman, however, noted that outreach to the Taliban could be misunderstood so it would be vital to have Karzai first explain it, in clear terms, as part of Afghanistan's own approach to peace and justice. Karzai told a story about a Taliban atrocity against a woman in Oruzgan as an example of some excesses which should be punished and would not be tolerated. But "innocent country people" fighting for the Taliban should be treated differently, he said. (Note: Embassy information is that the perpetrator of this atrocity was a Talib but that it was a case of domestic violence, not a political act as Karzai indicated.) Karzai said that the "mainstream" is against the Taliban and on our side. McCain noted that while there was concern over governance and corruption in Afghanistan the people don't want the Taliban and do participate in elections. He and Karzai pointed out the absence of religious and sectarian violence in Afghanistan as a very positive sign.

Pakistan Predictions

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¶12. (S) The group reviewed current developments in Pakistan, and Karzai said that the overall bilateral relationship, while an improvement over past years, was "held back" by the Army and ISI who continue to help the Afghan Taliban. He said that he wants to engage more and have U.S. support in doing so, since "the war won't end easily without Pakistani cooperation." He was pessimistic about the internal situation, as was his intelligence chief, Amrullah Saleh. Saleh noted that Pakistan's energy sector was in decline and that discontent in Pashtun areas was higher than it had been in the volatile 1960's and 1970's; meanwhile, he said, President Zardari is using Baluch nationalists as his base of support. Saleh predicted that neither the army nor Nawaz Sharif would bring Zardari's term to an abrupt end.

13 (U) CODEL McCain was unable to clear this message. EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 10KABUL104, AFGHAN MOMENTUM ON REINTEGRATION PLANNING

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
10KABUL104	2010-01-12 18:06	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO6367

PP RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

DE RUEHBUL #0104/01 0121824

ZNY SSSSS ZZH

P 121824Z JAN 10

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4675

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHXP/ALL NATO POST COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 KABUL 000104

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 01/12/2020

TAGS PGOV, PREL, PINS, MARR, AF

SUBJECT: AFGHAN MOMENTUM ON REINTEGRATION PLANNING

REF: SECSTATE 815

Classified By: AMBASSADOR KARL EIKENBERRY FOR REASONS 1.4 (b) & (d)

SUMMARY

¶1. (S/Rel UK) At President Karzai's direction, the Afghan Office of the National Security Council (ONSC) has taken on the task of interagency coordination of reintegration planning, forming an Interagency Policy Working Group (IPWG) which produced a draft National Reconciliation Policy and Reintegration of Armed Opposition Groups. The draft) essentially a statement of reintegration principles which crosses no U.S. redlines) recommends an appointed cabinet-level lead, a single office to oversee all reintegration/reconciliation efforts and a peace jirga (grand council) to sanction an implementation plan for Karzai's approval. Deputy National Security Advisor Shaida Abdali presented the draft paper to deputy ministers January 9. Previously, Presidential Advisor Masoom Stanekzai, the once and possibly future GIRA lead on reintegration, on January 5 produced a concept paper derived from the draft ONSC principles paper, which fills in broad implementation details. (Note: as of January 10, it appears Stanekzai may gain a ministerial post unrelated to reintegration.)

¶2. (S/Rel UK) GIROA will present Stanekzai,s reintegration concept paper to the international community at the January 13 Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) security sub-committee meeting and for endorsement at the full JCMB meeting on January 20. We expect that participants will acknowledge the paper at the January 28 London Foreign Ministerial on Afghanistan. While this process indicates Afghan movement on and commitment to developing a reintegration policy, none of these documents has yet been officially adopted and GIROA has yet to designate a clear reintegration lead. In a January 6 meeting, Deputy Ambassador Ricciardone and ISAF Reintegration Advisor Graeme Lamb reiterated to Stanekzai that GIROA should outline its integration strategy to the Afghan public prior to London, so that the international community can be seen as responding to an Afghan initiative (including with promises of financial support) rather than driving it. President Karzai told CODEL McCain and Ambassador Eikenberry on January 6 that he would announce a reintegration policy framework prior to London. END SUMMARY

Progress on Papers, But Not a Complete Policy

¶3. (S/Rel UK) At President Karzai,s direction, the Office of the National Security Council (ONSC) has taken on the task of interagency coordination of reintegration planning, forming an Interagency Policy Working Group (IPWG) which produced a draft &National Reconciliation Policy and Reintegration of Armed Oppositions8 (sic). The draft) essentially a statement of reintegration principles which crosses no U.S. redlines) recommends an appointed cabinet-level lead, a single office to oversee all reintegration/reconciliation efforts and a peace jirga (grand council) to sanction an implementation plan for Karzai,s approval. The ONSC paper is a statement of principles with an accompanying assessment of prospects for reintegration,s success and a list of reasons why past efforts have failed. It emphasizes the need for Afghan leadership over programs resourced by ISAF. It leaves the door open to insurgents joining the security forces, though it specifies that GIROA will not create autonomous militias.

¶4. (S/Rel UK) Presidential Advisor Masoom Stanekzai, the once and possibly future designated GIROA lead on reintegration, on January 5 produced a concept paper derived from the draft ONSC principles paper, which fills in broad implementation details. (Note: as of January 10, it appears Stanekzai may gain a ministerial post unrelated to reintegration, throwing into question the identity of the next reintegration lead.) Stanekzai,s paper builds on the ONSC paper, laying out basic criteria for communities, inclusion in a reintegration program by which they would receive development support. (Participating communities would accept the return of reintegrees and supervise their progress.) It stresses the need for education and vocational training for ex-fighters and their economic reintegration within their communities. It cites, without elaboration, &links8 to &public protection force initiatives8, and the National Solidarity Program (a GIROA initiative which provides grants to communities to fund development projects selected by locally elected development councils), which is one possible

source of development support for this program. The paper also lays out general timelines and roles for GIROA and the international community to follow. It distinguishes between different tiers of insurgents and argues, again

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without elaborating, that different packages and approaches will be necessary for each. Both papers recommend that GIROA establish a single office with a cabinet-equivalent lead with full authority for reintegration and reconciliation efforts under the direct supervision of the President. ISAF's Force Reintegration Cell (F-RIC) recommended to the ONSC that this lead be staffed by a full-time organization supported by ISAF, the UN and the international community. GIROA will also create an Afghan and international supervisory commission for financial oversight. (Note: we are emailing both ONSC and Stanekzai papers to SCA/A and S/SRAP.)

TIMELINES...

¶5. (S/Rel UK) ONSC officials told us on January 4 (and Stanekzai confirmed to us January 6) that they will present Stanekzai's paper for discussion at the January 13 JCMB security sub-committee meeting and for endorsement at the full JCMB meeting on January 20. President Karzai also told Ambassador Eikenberry and CODEL McCain on January 6 that he would announce a reintegration policy framework prior to the London Conference. ONSC expects to develop more detailed implementation plans and see a Presidential decision on a reintegration lead after the London conference.

¶6. (S/Rel UK) GIROA may convene a peace jirga to discuss and ratify the implementation plans, although probably not until May. GIROA would seek donor pledges at the Kabul conference, which will likely be held in April or May. Both drafts state that the reintegration program will run for four to five years. The Stanekzai paper notes that tactical reintegration will precede higher-level &political engagement& (reconciliation), and an evaluation phase where GIROA will assess its progress.

...AND REDLINES

¶7. (C/Rel UK) Both documents respect U.S. &red lines& on insurgent reintegration (insurgents must lay down arms and renounce violence, reject al Qaeda, and abide by the Afghan Constitution) but there are some passages that we will suggest ONSC amend prior to release. Both drafts, but especially Stanekzai's, seem so focused on reconciling insurgents that they ignore the rights of victims, and largely ignore the issue of perverse incentives. A vague reference to &amnesty& for former insurgents in the Stanekzai paper is confusing. (The ONSC paper states that criminals are not eligible for benefits and insurgents not immune from prosecution for violations of human rights.)

¶8. (/Rel UK) On January 6 Deputy Ambassador Ricciardone and ISAF Reintegration Advisor Graeme Lamb called on Stanekzai at his request for a stock-taking session. Key takeaways:

--All reiterated the importance of ensuring that the international community sticks to its collectively stated intention of supporting an Afghan-led reintegration process.

--Stanekzai detailed ongoing GIROA discussions over how best to structure a trust fund for handling funds earmarked for reintegration programs. D/AMB noted that the USG would not wish to work its contributions via UNDP, one scenario under consideration. (Note: on January 9 UK emboffs shared with us a proposal for a &dual window8 method, through which donors could choose to have their contributions handled either by UNDP or a commercial bank. We expect this to be a topic for discussion among SRAPs at Abu Dhabi.)

--D/AMB took the opportunity to update Stanekzai on the internal USG processes related to the release of CERP and USAID funding for reintegration, including the requirement that the Secretary certify that GIROA had a workable plan and that the Department had consulted with GIROA on it. Stanekzai evinced confidence that the ongoing, extensive GIROA interagency discussions would result in broad acceptance of the plan, with the looming London conference serving a &forcing function8 to get interested ministries to move beyond &personality issues8 to commit.

--D/AMB and LtGen (ret&™d) Graeme Lamb recommended that the Karzai administration publicly outline its reintegration strategy prior to the London conference, which would then serve as a venue for the international community to offer concrete support. Stanekzai agreed and said that he had discussed this two days earlier with President Karzai, who planned to make such an announcement in Kabul.

--Stanekzai cautioned that reintegration of potentially tens of thousands of &foot soldiers8 would be a long-term proposition) a five year-plan. Much work needed to carried

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out, including development of a communications strategy, engagement with clerical leaders, and a plan for engagement with the Government of Pakistan. Stanekzai was eager to apply lessons learned from reintegration experience in other countries, such as Colombia, Thailand, and the Philippines.

¶9. (S/Rel UK) COMMENT: ONSC is delivering the long-awaited &Afghan lead8 on reintegration, though on timelines that some international supporters will find frustrating. We believe that the time GIROA puts into building interagency coordination and consensus before moving out on reintegration is time well spent, particularly given the ongoing cabinet rebuilding effort. We will work with GIROA and ISAF to encourage some fine-tuning of the papers (e.g. deleting gratuitous swipes at Pakistani ISI support for insurgents and purported ISAF insensitivity to civilian casualties). Whether or not Stanekzai) a talented individual and open interlocutor) remains the lead official on reintegration, we are pleased to see reintegration planning becoming institutionalized across ministry/agency lines. Coupled with ONSC,s engagement on banning ammonium nitrate (septel), its emergent lead on

reintegration signals a welcome evolution of Afghanistan,s interagency process.

¶10. (S/Rel UK) The idea of a peace jirga to ratify GIROA reintegration planning, if well handled, can be a good source of political support. Credible reintegration efforts require buy-in from non-Pashtuns who might otherwise be suspicious of a Pashtun-only &separate peace.⁸ Considering the scale of development money being earmarked for reintegration support, we are cognizant of the danger of creating perverse incentives, short-changing individuals and communities that have not fed the insurgency, and the potential for a lack of coordination with other governance and development initiatives targeting the same areas. Moreover, as a post-jirga plan could look considerably different than the GIROA plan that is submitted to it, we should appropriately caveat our release of funds should a post-jirga plan cross U.S. redlines. END COMMENT EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 10KABUL131, SEVEN MORE MINISTERS APPROVED -- TEN REJECTED

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
10KABUL131	2010-01-16 15:03	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

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PP RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

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P 161515Z JAN 10

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4754

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 05 KABUL 000131

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 01/16/2019

TAGS PGOV, PREL, AF

SUBJECT: SEVEN MORE MINISTERS APPROVED -- TEN REJECTED

REF: KABUL 0021

Classified By: Ambassador Eikenberry for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (S) Summary: The Afghan Lower House (Wolesi Jirga - WJ) has voted to accept 7 of 17 Cabinet nominees presented in President Karzai's second tranche of candidates. The Parliament has not yet decided if it will recess until mid-February, or continue until the new Cabinet is complete. Presidential Palace Chief of Staff Daudzai told us January 12 that this was the desired outcome -- a political calculation to allow Karzai to back out of campaign promises with traditional powerbrokers. The political winners of the vote include Pashtun and Tajik conservatives and jihadis, as well as a Counternarcotics Minister associated with the drug mafia. Meanwhile, neither the two strongest female candidates nor any of the Uzbek and Hazara candidates passed muster. Many MPs claimed they voted down candidates because they were "weak nobodies," connected to warlords, did not offer sufficient significant "donations" to their 2010 Parliamentary elections campaigns, or due to ethnic affiliations. End Summary.

WJ Votes on the Second Tranche of Cabinet Nominees

¶2. (U) On January 16, the WJ voted to approve seven of 17 Cabinet nominees presented in Karzai's second tranche of candidates. Ten nominees were rejected. Some ministerial candidates, like the MRRD Minister, gained exactly the minimum 113 votes required, while the Counternarcotics Minister received the highest number of votes at 162. Of a total of 249 MPs, 223 were present for the vote. The Literacy Ministry was not included on this latest list because Karzai has not formally created the new ministry and the WJ has not approved it. The President decided to keep the Martyred and Disabled as part of the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry. Four more positions that require confirmation but have not yet been submitted are the heads of the intelligence service, the Central Bank, and the Red Crescent Society, as well as the Attorney General. These positions are traditionally submitted after the completion of the ministerial approval process.

¶3. (U) Those candidates approved in the second tranche included the Foreign Affairs Minister, Justice, Hajj and Religious Affairs, Economy, Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), and the Labor, Social Affairs and Martyred Minister. Vote tallies and short biographic notes are in paras 10 and 11. The Parliament has not yet decided if it will recess until mid-February, or continue until the Cabinet is complete. They will meet again on January 17 and will likely decide at that point.

Palace: "We Wanted Them To Be Rejected"

¶4. (S) Presidential Palace Chief of Staff Omer Daudzai told D/Ambassador Ricciardone January 12 that the palace purposefully introduced weak candidates associated with some of the traditional powerbrokers so that the Parliament would reject them. Daudzai only expected about five nominees to pass. He claimed this approach allowed Karzai to back out of campaign promises to some of these former warlords, and instead, nominate more candidates that were loyal to Karzai. Daudzai claimed Karzai had asked him to refrain from campaigning for ministers, and that Karzai was pleased that the tone of the powerbrokers in meetings to discuss cabinet nominations had already "improved" since the first cabinet list, as the warlords were more willing to accept Karzai's suggested cabinet nominations. Daudzai believed the third list would be "stronger."

Political Winners and Losers

¶5. (S) The political winners of the vote include Pashtun and Tajik conservatives, as well as a Counternarcotics Minister associated with the drug mafia. The winners also included one Afghan Millat/former King Zahir Shah candidate (Foreign Affairs), two candidates associated with former warlord and fundamentalist Ustad Rasoul Sayyaf (Hajj and Justice), one Hezb-e-Islami Afghanistan candidate (Economy), and three candidates either associated with former warlords Marshal Fahim or Professor Rabbani's Jamiat party (MRRD, Labor and Social Affairs, and Counternarcotics.) Meanwhile, the two strongest female candidates were not approved, nor were the three candidates associated with Dostum and the Uzbek Junbesh

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party (Health, Transport, and Communications.) The three Hazara candidates (Commerce, Public Works, and Urban Development) and the one pro-Iran candidate (Higher Education) also failed.

Vote Motivations Remain Numerous

¶6. (SBU) The WJ's display of strength both on January 2 and January 16 no doubt reflected a variety of motives, including candidates' qualifications,

blow-back from executive dominance, political and financial gain, as well as a desire to avoid warlord candidates and certain ethnicities (reftel A). Several MPs told us this cabinet list was full of "weak nobodies" lacking the political stature to be effective ministers.

¶7. (SBU) The WJ also sought to assert itself after years of executive dominance, in particular in the first round of cabinet voting. At least three cabinet ministers had received WJ votes of no confidence in the past five years, yet Karzai kept them in office as acting ministers, in some cases for several years. Also, when the WJ overrode Karzai's veto of the Media Law, which required the Executive to obtain the WJ's approval of the head of the main government-supported media outlet RTA, the Executive sent the case to the Supreme Court and quietly had Karzai's version approved during the busy presidential elections period.

¶8. (S) Understandably, MPs wanted to maximize their leverage for both political and financial gain. The cabinet approval process is one of the rare occasions when the WJ is in a position of power. MPs tell us this is the time when MPs can obtain significant "donations" to their 2010 Parliamentary elections campaigns. Al-Haj Moeen Marastyal (Pashtun, Kunduz) told us January 14 that MPs prefer second and third lists of cabinet nominees so they can receive second and third envelopes of cash. He claimed the Counternarcotics Minister was distributing to MPs record amounts, from 8,000 - 15,000 USD per MP.

¶9. (S) Some MPs have voted against warlord candidates, and opposed or supported others depending on ethnic affiliations. Notably, unlike in the first round of cabinet voting, some traditional powerbrokers are now attempting to disassociate themselves from the candidates. However, influential former warlord Sayyaf's Political Advisor admitted to us January 12 that most of these candidates are in fact associated with the powerbrokers, and indeed Rabbani had his candidates, as did Sayyaf. They did not want to admit it for fear that this would cause their candidates to fail the approval process.

Short Bios And Vote Tallies

¶10. (S) Approved:

--Minister of Foreign Affairs Zalmay Rassoul. Pashtun. Afghan Millat Political Party affiliation, but also associated with the former king Zahir Shah's family. Kabul. He received his Doctorate in Medicine degree from Paris, France. He is a competent National Security Advisor, although not the most influential or outspoken member of the previous cabinet. However, he is likely to perform about as well as the incumbent. He speaks Pashtu, Dari, English, French, Italian and Arabic. Yea: 132 Nay: 82 Abstain/blank/spoiled:

--Minister of Justice Habibullah Ghuleb. Tajik. He was nominated by the infamous Northern Alliance warlord MP Ustad Abdurab Rasoul Sayyaf, and his Islamic Call Political Party. Parwan. PhD in Sharia Law. He was nominated for the 9th Supreme Court Justice slot in 2006, but Parliament rejected his nomination. Yea: 115 Nay: 99 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 9

--Hajj and Religious Affairs. Dr. Mohammad Yusuf Niazi. Pashtun. Sayyaf's Islamic Call Party. Nangarhar. PhD in Islamic Studies. He worked in the Justice sector during the time of the former King Zahir Shah. Yea: 132 Nay: 80 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 10

--Economy Ministry

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Haji Abdul Hadi Arghandewal. Pashtun. He is the head of the Hezb-e-Islami Afghanistan Party (HIA). BA in Economics. He is also currently one of Karzai's Tribal Advisors. His exposure to the West -- he lived in the U.S. for a few years and still has family in California -- has made him a notable moderate on economic and social issues in a party whose membership gravitates to conservative Islamic beliefs. He was Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's financial officer for much of the 1980s. He has modernized the party and renounced the use of violence, and broke with Hekmatyar in the late 1990s. However, many in the party base remains predominantly loyal to Hekmatyar, and he no doubt remains in some contact with him. He is perhaps the best face that HIA could put forward. He speaks Dari, Pashtu and English. Yea: 121 Nay: 94 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 8

--Rural Rehabilitation and Development Ministry Jarullah Mansoori. Tajik. He is associated with influential MP Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani and his Jamiat party according to many MPs, but Rabbani's son Salahuddin told us January 11 that he is a candidate of Marshal Fahim. Badakhshan. MA in Political Science. Former Deputy Director in the Afghan Environmental Agency. He comes from a religious family that some local staff consider fundamentalist. We have heard from multiple interlocutors that he performed poorly at a relatively low-level position in the little known Environmental Agency. An Embassy local staff member who worked with Mansoori as an interpreter told us that Mansoori often cheated the most vulnerable; he never paid a local tea vendor he used to frequent, and even stole fuel from his modest father. Yea: 113 Nay: 102 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 7

--Labor, Social Affairs and Martyred - Amena Safi Afzali. Female. Tajik. Rumored to be associated with Rabbani's Jamiat Party, associated with Fahim Khan and Rabbani. Herat. BA in Biology from Kabul University. She was a delegate at the constitutional Loya Jirga. Member of Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission. She taught Biology at Kabul University, and fled to Iran during the Russian invasion. Her husband, a well-known jihadi fighter, was killed by the Russians. Yea: 117 Nay: 94 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 11

--Counternarcotics - Zarar Ahmad Moqbel. Tajik. Associated with First Vice President and former warlord Marshal Fahim. Parwan. BA in Education from Parwan University, although many express doubt that he completed his degree. Former Minister of Interior. He was removed from office due to his reputation for ineffectiveness and allegations of corruption, according to ISAF. He is perhaps the worst of the candidates. Former Deputy Interior Minister and MP Helaludin Helal claimed to us January 11 that Moqbel was supported by the drug mafia, to include Karzai's younger half-brother Ahmed Wali Karzai and Arif Khan Noorzai. He joined the jihad against the Soviets in 1988, and later

served as the Kabul police chief; he also worked at Afghanistan's Embassy in Tehran. He speaks Dari, Pashtu and English. Yea: 162 Nay: 56 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 5

¶11. (C) Rejected

--Higher Education Ministry Dr. Muhammad Hashim Hesmatullahee. Kazilbash. Many MPs allege he was nominated by the Iranians; in the past he has helped MPs with Iranian visas. Shia. Kabul. BA in Literature from the Kabul University, MA from Tehran's Tabatabai University in Journalism. He has been a lecturer at the Journalism Department at the Kabul University since 2004, and served as the head of the Union of Afghan Journalists. He speaks Dari, Pashtu and English. Yea: 100 Nay: 108 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 12

--Public Health Ministry Dr. Suraya Dalil. Female. Uzbek. Former warlord General Dostum and the Junbesh Political Party. Jowzjan. She obtained her MA from Harvard in Public Health in 2003, and is particularly dedicated to maternal health issues. She used to work with UNICEF, Doctors Without Borders, and the International Organization for Migration. Many MPs told us she did not receive many votes because she was seen in the

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medio without a head scarf, while others were convinced she was a Communist. Yea: 86 Nay: 116 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 17

--Public Works Ministry Engineer Bashir Lalee. Hazara. He was supported by Khalili and Mohaqqueq. Bachelors in Construction. Ghazni. His father was a former Minister of Mines under Zahir Shah. Yea: 78 Nay: 129 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 16

--Commerce Ministry Mohammad Hadi Hakimi. Hazara. He is associated with influential Hazara former warlord Haji Mohammad Mohaqqueq and his branch of the Wahdat party. Ghazni. He received his Law Degree in Canada and his BA in International Commerce in Iran. He refused his nomination, however, on January 11 citing family issues. MPs claimed to us that in addition to his worries about losing his Canadian citizenship, he did not want to become a weak minister with two masters, Karzai and Mohaqqueq. Yea: 69 Nay: 127 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 15

--Transportation Ministry Abdul Rahim Ouras. Turkman. Former warlord General Dostum and the Junbesh Political Party. Faryab. Phd in Construction. No one in the Transportation Ministry appears to know him, and neither do their contacts, including the Acting Minister of Transport Alami. Many MPs told us he performed poorly during the question and answer period of his approval hearing January 11. Other MPs told us he has good work experience, but it will be difficult for him to overcome the Dostum stigma and obtain enough MP votes. Yea: 87 Nay: 123 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 13

--Women's Affairs Ministry Palwasha Hassan. Female. Pashtun. Some think she is associated with Pir Gailani. Kabul. Bachelor of Science from a University in Pakistan. MA in Post Conflict Recovery from the York University in the UK. She established the Afghan Women's Education Center, and co-founded the Afghan Women's Network. The Embassy considers her a very good selection -- the United States Institute of Peace highly recommends her. She speaks Pashtu, Dari, Urdu and English. Some MPs claimed Hassan did not pass because she was had strong relationships with outspoken liberal elements in the

Parliament, something the former mujahadeen and conservative MPs could not tolerate. Yea: 56 Nay: 150 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 19

--Refugee Affairs Ministry Eng. Abdul Rahim. Tajik. He is associated with Marshal Fahim and influential MP Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani and his Jamiat party, although Rabbani no longer supports Rahim's candidacy according to Rabbani's son and several Tajik MPs close to Jamiat. This has caused Rahim to reconsider his candidacy, for fear that without Rabbani he will not get enough votes. Badakhshan. BA in Engineering from the Kabul-based Polytechnic University. He served as a representative of Jamiat for 10 years with assignments in China, Washington, and Islamabad, under Rabbani. He has also served as Afghanistan's Ambassador to Indonesia. Most criticize this selection, since he has no relevant background, but instead has an affiliation with traditional Afghan powerbrokers and former commanders. MP Helal claimed that when Rahim was the first Commerce Minister in Karzai's government, he was removed due to corruption allegations. He speaks Dari, Pashtu and English. Yea: 82 Nay: 128 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 13

--Tribal and Border Affairs Ministry Arsala Jamal. Pashtun. Hezb-e-Islami Afghanistan. Khost. Bachelor of Economics from the University of Malaya. He served as the Khost Governor from 2006 - 2008, but resigned and moved back to Canada in 2008 after the at least six assassination attempts. Canadian citizen. He was an active member in Institute in Pakistan and Balkh University. Yea: 105 Nay: 104 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 14 EIKENBERRY

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uncorroborated rumors of corruption. He speaks Pashtu, Dari and English. Yea: 94 Nay: 116 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 13

--Urban Development Ministry Engineer Sultan Hussein Hasari. Hazara. Associated with Second Vice President Khalili and his branch of the Wahdaation of Danish Architects, he has worked on projects in Iran and Afghanistan; he has also been a visiting lecturer in these countries. Yea: 80 Nay: 128 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 15

--Communications Ministry Abdul Qadoos Hamidi. His nomination was announced on January 10. Jowzjan. Dostum and the Junbesh party. He has a Bachelors and Masters Degree from Kabul University in communications and technology. He was the Deputy Minister of Mines, and lectured at the Information Institute in Pakistan and Balkh University. Yea: 105 Nay: 104 Abstain/blank/spoiled: 14 EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 10KABUL170, SRAP MEETING WITH KARZAI: MOVING REINTEGRATION

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
10KABUL170	2010-01-19 05:05	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4801
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 KABUL 000170

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 01/20/2020
TAGS PGOV, PREL, AF
SUBJECT: SRAP MEETING WITH KARZAI: MOVING REINTEGRATION
POLICY TOWARDS LONDON

Classified By: Ambassador Karl Eikenberry, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (S) Summary: President Karzai told S/SRAP Holbrooke January 16 that he wants to announce a reintegration policy before London but save the details of the plan for a rollout at the Kabul conference in late spring. Karzai is still conflicted about finalizing the policy, according to several observers, but has apparently grasped that a pre-London announcement can leverage donations and other support from key nations, especially the Gulf. He said that elections “were likely to slip a few months” although media reports indicated that he told Holbrooke (and UK FM Milliband, who he saw later that day) that the elections would be “on time.” On transition and a NATO SCR, Karzai’s position tracks with ours and he promised to raise his concerns with the UK. End summary.

Reviewing 2009 - New Policies Literally Bearing Fruit

¶2. (S) In a relaxed one-hour meeting with President Karzai, his newly-confirmed Foreign Minister Zalmay Rassoul, and four other senior advisors, SRAP Holbrooke, Ambassador Eikenberry and SRAP Senior Advisor Barney Rubin discussed developments since Karzai’s November 2009 inauguration. Karzai spoke first about the Haiti earthquake and expressed sympathy at the tragedy from “a country that truly understands.” He said that one of his servants had asked him to do something for Haiti and he planned to do so - the Palace announced a gift of \$200,000 later that day.

¶3. (C) Holbrooke noted that the night before the Embassy/ISAF team had briefed President Obama on progress since the elections; this was also a moment to review the nearly one year of the Obama Administration's work in Afghanistan. Since the new Obama strategy was articulated, Holbrooke said, the impact on areas such as agriculture have been tremendous. Karzai agreed and said that the recent visit by Agriculture Secretary Vilsak had been extremely positive. Holbrooke said that with about \$400 million in U.S. assistance, and more from other key donors such as Japan and India, Afghanistan's agricultural sector was poised to succeed. The next stage, Karzai and Holbrooke agreed, would be the re-establishment of an Agricultural Development Bank by the end of 2010.

¶4. (C) Karzai said that Afghanistan does have excellent ministers such as Minister of Agriculture Rahimi, who Holbrooke said Vilsack had praised as "world-class" but lacks capable administrators on almost every level. The brain drain of the war years was enormous, Karzai said, and claimed that luring back expatriates would not succeed since now they were "too costly" to keep.

Conferences: "Will Kabul Happen?"

¶5. (C) Karzai will attend the Munich Security Conference; Holbrooke noted that he and NSA Jones would likely attend and that the Germans hoped to make it a productive event. He said that the recent Abu Dhabi conference of Special Representatives for Afghanistan and Pakistan had been very useful, especially with the presentations by Foreign Minister Spanta and Mosoom Stanekzai, the architect of the new reintegration policy. Holbrooke noted that an unusually high number of Muslim nations had been represented in Abu Dhabi, with Saudi Arabia sending a lower-level delegate (for mainly internal reasons.)

¶6. (C) While the original intention had been to hold the Kabul meeting ahead of London, Holbrooke said, our interest now was to make the January 28 London conference a success. This is a time to rally world support for Karzai and for the new U.S. strategy, he said. A "big headline" that showed the way forward and consolidated this support is the desired outcome of this conference, Holbrooke said, rather than pledging of money or troops; the best headline would be something like "the world community supports President Karzai and his reintegration plan."

¶7. (C) Karzai agreed but asked, "will a Kabul conference actually happen?" in view of the international focus and efforts that have been expended on London. The U.S. visitors turned the question around to ask Karzai if he plans to hold the conference and invite international attendees.

Karzai countered by asking "will the Secretary attend," we answered that this is the current U.S. intention and he said that his proposed timing would be in April.

Reintegration: Reassurance from the U.S.

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¶8. (S) Regarding progress to date in establishing both a reintegration policy and a reconciliation approach for Taliban fighters and political leaders, respectively, Karzai indicated that he was close to finalizing the new Afghan policy. Claiming that he had only read the new draft National Security Council policy papers the night before, Karzai said that he "liked this plan more than the previous ones." He believes that this approach will give foot soldiers lots of incentive to turn, while Rassoul noted that during his lobbying efforts he had spoken to nearly 200 MPs and eighty percent were in favor of reintegration. Holbrooke asked if this applied to women MPs who are especially important to this effort; Rassoul said that if they are given the full information about the program they are less skeptical. (Note: SRAP Holbrooke met with seven female MPs on January 17 - septel.)

¶9. (S) Despite his positive feeling about the plan, Karzai said, before "technicalities" are figured out he wants to be sure he has understanding and political backing from all relevant quarters - most importantly from the United States. Next, he wants Saudi Arabia's political support as well as any financial resources they might contribute. Rubin noted that the Saudi officials he had visited a week ago are prepared to not only back the plan politically but to offer Hajj/Umrah "packages" to reintegrees, which would offer a strong religious motivation and undercut the Taliban. The Saudis may also offer deradicalization program advice, Rubin said. (Note: Karzai said that Saudi programs were probably too "hard core" for the "country bumpkins" they believe are currently filling the Taliban ranks, but the offer is appreciated. End note.)

¶10. (S) Karzai turned to the issue of ensuring Pakistan's support for the policy since "neither reintegration nor reconciliation would work without them." If they are not on board it will be "the same vicious cycle of trial - failure - trial - partial success" that previous reintegration plans have faced. In Abu Dhabi, Holbrooke said, senior U.S., Jordanian, Afghan, Saudi and Pakistani officials discussed this issue and all had stressed to Pakistan that they had to support this policy. Pakistan countered that the "totality of the Afghanistan-Pakistan relationship" should be reassessed; Karzai said that "we are beginning to see that point."

¶11. (S) Holbrooke assured Karzai that Afghanistan's current reintegration draft policy has the backing of the U.S. and seems to have strong Gulf buy-

in, which Karzai flagged as crucial to psychologically undermining the Taliban. The U.S. would not prevent this from happening as it had in the past, Holbrooke said; on the contrary we plan to help fund the plan. However, "we are all waiting on you" to announce exactly what the plan will contain, he said to Karzai, and to make maximum use of London that announcement should occur before January 28. Karzai asked whether the plan was really for London or Kabul - Eikenberry explained that to leverage the window of opportunity that was now open for contributions by the Japanese, Gulf states and Europe there should be a conceptual plan in time for London. Real implementation, especially given donor funding mechanisms, could wait for the Kabul Conference announcement of modalities.

¶12. (S) Karzai gave more details about his concept for a "Loya Jirga" which would reaffirm the Afghan partnership with the international community and also endorse the reintegration plan and reconciliation efforts. It could occur before the Kabul Conference, he said, and would involve 500-1000 people including MPs and traditional leaders. He compared it to the gathering of 1200 people who approved the 2005 Strategic Partnership Agreement before he flew to Washington to sign the Agreement with President Bush. He reassured Holbrooke and Eikenberry that "some people will shout" but that the Afghan way is to complain first, then support.

Elections: I Won't Mention In London

¶13. (S) Holbrooke noted the ongoing "confusion" over 2010 elections, and advised that in order to avoid a pointless debate in London Karzai should either clarify his position on the timing of elections or take the issue off the table. Karzai said that he is not planning to mention elections in his speech at London - there is no time to discuss this issue and that it wasn't the right venue to bring up such an internal matter. The Independent Electoral Commission, with reference to the Constitution, would come up with a new date that is likely to be "a few months" after May, he said.

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Eikenberry noted that while it was clear that elections should stick to the constitutional timeframe of 2010, the exact date and the conditions - including reforms - still have to be determined. Karzai pushed for U.S. funding of the elections on the grounds that "democracy in Afghanistan has been your big achievement." In a later aside, Chief of Staff Daudzai told Eikenberry that if the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior make the case for an election delay, the IEC would accept it. Eikenberry offered to have international community representatives then meet with the IEC to be briefed on the reasons for the new election date and show our support.

¶14. (S) In later discussions with FM Milliband, he indicated his concern that the elections would take place without any reforms, and in fact expressed his view that a 2010 date was not his preference since it would not allow for significant changes. Eikenberry noted to him that without

improvements we were not planning to fund the elections. Eikenberry said that he had pressed Karzai in an earlier meeting on the issue of the IEC having mishandled the elections at a provincial level. Even with Karzai's myopia (Karzai absolves the IEC at a national level from wrongdoing and blames the ECC for the allegations of fraud) he accepts that the IEC provincial authorities mishandled their duties. Daudzai noted that IEC Chairman Ludin should have returned by now but is still outside Afghanistan.

NATO SCR and Transition

¶15. (S) On another potential point of discussion in London, the civilian counterpart to General McChrystal, Karzai said that he did not understand or accept the concept of a high-level NATO Senior Civilian Representative with powers and responsibilities commensurate with COMISAF. In fact, I don't meet with the current NATO SCR, Karzai said, adding that he would foresee conflict if there were two empowered NATO representatives. For PRT coordination the nation who controls the PRT should take the lead on development in that area, Karzai said.

This cable was cleared by Ambassador Holbrooke. EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 10KABUL436, AFGHANISTAN'S OUTLOOK ON IRAN: A KARZAI INSIDER'S

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
10KABUL436	2010-02-03 13:01	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

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PP RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL
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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5365
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 000436

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 02/02/2020

TAGS PREL, IR, AF

SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN'S OUTLOOK ON IRAN: A KARZAI INSIDER'S
VIEW

KABUL 00000436 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: D/Ambassador Ricciardone; Reasons (b) and (d)

¶1. (S) Summary: President Karzai's Chief of Staff and former Ambassador to Iran, Omar Daudzai, offered the Palace's outlook on Iran's role in Afghanistan. Daudzai suggested that Karzai could provide an "open door" for the United States to engage Iran, at such time as the U.S. may judge this useful. Daudzai had found in Iran that paradoxically, the Iranian people hate foreigners, except for Americans; but that the Iranian revolution survives on its animosity towards the United States. He said that the Iranians no longer deny their support for the Taliban. While there is room for "indirect" U.S.-Afghan cooperation on Afghanistan, Daudzai cautioned that at best the Iranians would only "tolerate" our presence in Afghanistan. End Summary.

We Can Help Open the Door to Iran

¶2. (S) At a meeting within the GIROA with COS Daudzai, D/Amb. Ricciardone asked for Afghanistan's outlook on the anti-coalition Jundullah organization (Septel), and Karzai's and Daudzai's assessments of Afghanistan's interests with Iran. Daudzai confirmed February 2, that only he and President Karzai had any substantial political engagement with the Iranian government. Karzai does pay close attention to Iran, Daudzai said, and he suggested that Karzai could help "open a door" for the United States to engage Iran "perhaps after Ahmadinejad leaves the scene," or at any time the USG may judge useful. He explained that Karzai had maintained excellent relations with Iran and Khatami personally, and that Karzai had obtained the former Iranian president's support for Daudzai's appointment as Afghan Ambassador to Tehran. Relations had become more complicated with Ahmadinejad's election. Daudzai went on to serve about a year and a half in Tehran, from 2004-2005.

¶3. (S) D/Amb. Ricciardone posited that, while President Obama and Secretary Clinton had made clear the United States' willingness to discuss our differences with the Iranians, Iran evidently is not ready to engage with us. Even though we believe that many Iranians desire more normal relations with the United States, the Iranian government appears out of touch with its people, in particular an increasingly angry middle class.

¶4. (S) Daudzai related that after the first and only time he was summoned to the MFA for a complaint on alleged GIROA support for Jundullah (Septel), and his categorical denial later proved true, he developed excellent relations with Iranian officials. Nonetheless, living in Tehran had been challenging. At first, Iranian intelligence shadowed Daudzai's every move; after he told the Iranians that he was annoyed that he was being followed, the Iranians became more subtle in their approach. He was astonished that while there were no Sunni mosques in Tehran, an estimated 30 to 40 percent of its population was Sunni (combining Iranian and Afghan Sunnis residing there). He established an informal mosque in the basement of the Afghan Embassy, an act that drew much appreciation from the Sunni population.

Iranian People Dislike Foreigners, Except Americans

¶5. (S) Reflecting on his time in Tehran, Daudzai said he had reached two main conclusions: 1) Common Iranians hate foreigners, except for Americans, whom they miss. To illustrate, he said that even his wife's doctor told her, "Please tell the Americans to bring their soldiers to our country next." 2) paradoxically, the Iranian revolution lives on its animosity towards the United States. If this animosity ends, then the revolution will end. The national leadership knows this and thus do all they can to sustain the revolution. While Daudzai did not foresee that the Iranian revolution would end under Ahmadinejad's tenure, he predicted that Ahmadinejad's influence over the remainder of his term would wane. Therefore, he said, it was opportune to now start preparing the ground for U.S. relations with Iran under a better leader who would replace Ahmadinejad even though the Supreme Leader really "calls the shots." Daudzai said that Iran's "real" Foreign Minister is not Motaki, but rather Ali Akbar Velayati, who reports to the Supreme Leader.

The Two Sides of Iranian Influence in Afghanistan

¶6. (S) Daudzai said Iran's influence in Afghanistan, like

Pakistanâ€™s, has been both helpful and hurtful. (Last year, Daudzai had acknowledged that Iran paid limited amounts of money to the Palace only episodically and unpredictably. He contrasted this with sustained U.S. financial support to Afghanistan with far more than the Iraniansâ€™ occasional cash payment.) Iran and Pakistan each had supported their own favored Afghan Mujahedin groups against the Soviets, largely along religious affiliations. Likewise, in the current conflict, Iran, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia were each supporting their â€œpreferredâ€ Taliban groups. This time, however, Iranâ€™s support was driven by â€œa war of objectivesâ€ not religious sympathies: Iran would even support Sunni Taliban to counter Western influence in Afghanistan, so long as the Taliban factions they supported were not affiliated with Mullah Omar.

¶7. (S) Daudzai said that two years ago when he raised with the Iranians their support for Afghan Taliban, they had flatly denied any involvement. However, over the past half year, the Iranians, including their Ambassador in Kabul, no longer deny this assertion -- now they remain silent, he said. Daudzai attributed the Iranian change in posture to their awareness that the GIROA has evidence of Iranian support for some Taliban elements.

¶8. (S) Daudzai said that on occasion, young Afghan males are allowed to cross into Iran, where they are recruited and trained before returning to Afghanistan to fight against the GIROA and Coalition Forces. The Iranians also recruit Afghan university students and graduates. Daudzai said that approximately 7,000 Afghans hold Iranian university degrees, including three of President Karzaiâ€™s cabinet picks, who â€œfortunatelyâ€ Parliament did not confirm. He claimed that Iran is also offering three-year visas to Afghans who deposit USD 100,000 in an Iranian bank account.

¶9. (S) According to Daudzai, Iran grooms thousands of Afghan religious scholars. After completing their education in Iran, they return to Afghanistan to work in Madrassas, where they continue to receive â€œsupport packagesâ€ from Iran. The support package included a monthly salary. Daudzai claimed that a man named Ibrahim directed this program from the Supreme Leaderâ€™s office. He also asserted that in addition to financing Afghan religious leaders, Iran had provided salary support for some GIROA deputy ministers and other officials, including â€œone or two even in the Palace.â€ Daudzai claimed that some of these officials had been relieved of their duties because â€œyou canâ€™t be an honest Afghan if you receive a (Iran) package.â€

U.S.-Iranian Convergence of Interests is Complicated

¶10. (S) Daudzai opined that there could be room for indirect, but not direct, cooperation between Iran and the U.S. regarding Afghanistan. Iran at

best would "tolerate" the U.S. participation in an area of common interest here, he said. He would reflect further on the subject and would look forward to continuing the conversation. Eikenberry

Viewing cable 10KABUL467, POWERBROKER AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES IN SPIN BOLDAK

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
10KABUL467	2010-02-07 12:12	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO3435

OO RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

DE RUEHBUL #0467/01 0381234

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O 071234Z FEB 10 ZDK

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5420

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KABUL 000467

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SRAP, SCA/FO, SCA/A, EUR/RPM, INR/B

STATE PASS USAID FOR ASIA/SCAA

USFOR-A FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/07/2020

TAGS: PGOV KDEM KCOR KCRM PREL AF

SUBJECT: POWERBROKER AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES IN SPIN BOLDAK

REF: A. (A) KABUL 463

Â¶B. (B) KABUL 408

Â¶C. (C) 09 KABUL 4039

Â¶D. (D) 09 KABUL 4024

KABUL 00000467 001.2 OF 003

Classified By: Interagency Provincial Affairs Deputy Director Hoyt Yee
for Reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Spin Boldak District in Kandahar Province and its major border crossing point to Pakistan at Weech-Chaman have become the focus of a number of high profile coalition efforts given the upcoming military operations in Regional Command-South (RC-S). Although there is a high potential for large scale revenue collections through customs collected at the border, the lack of a strong, capable district government has allowed powerbrokers, especially Afghan Border Police (ABP) Chief Colonel Abdul Razzik, to fill the void. Accused constantly of illegal trafficking and taxing activities through Weech-Chaman (most recently by a January 19 Washington Post article), Razzik has been careful to maintain a cooperative relationship with the ISAF leadership to guard his position. ISAF and USG interlocutors walk a thin tightrope when working with this allegedly corrupt official who is also a major security stabilizing force. Despite Razzik's power and influence in Spin Boldak, we will press the GIROA to establish and empower competent district governanceto counterbalance the powerbrokers and make Spin Boldak a profitable customs hub within southern Afghanistan. As one of the 80 terrain districts, we expect it to ultimately become a focus of enhanced capacity building through the District Delivery Program (DDP). End summary.

High Level Attention

¶2. (C) Reflecting the importance of Spin Boldak District to the coalition effort, particularly in light of the military surge in the South, COMISAF and the RC-South Commander visited the Weech border crossing point on January 18, arriving in Afghanistan from the Pakistan side of the border along with the head of the Pakistani Frontier Corps. The goal of their visit was to engage Afghan authorities on issues related to border security, including cooperation between the neighboring countries and ISAF convoy traffic. Unlike the Pakistani and ISAF delegations, which were comprised of high-level commanding officers, the Afghan contingent was led by Colonel Abdul Razzik, Fourth Zone Chief of the Afghan Border Police (ABP) responsible for Spin Boldak and local powerbroker, accompanied by the weak District Governor, Haji Abdul Ghani. No higher level Afghan officials, political or military, were in attendance, a sign of Razzik's apparent unquestioned -- but also unaccountable -- authority over issues pertaining to Spin Boldak and its environs.

Cost Benefit Analysis

¶3. (C) Razzik's apparent autonomy and connections to many influential officials, including President Karzai (through former Helmand governor Assadullah Wafa, an Achekzai kinsmen and the president's adviser on tribal affairs) and former Kandahar governor and mentor Gul Agha Sherzai leave him well positioned to maintain power and influence in the district. Additionally, he has been amenable to many of the requests made of him by ISAF, including allowing his troops to partner with coalition forces. Requests to which he has acquiesced include support for interim improvements planned at the border crossing point intended to both expedite the increase

in ISAF convoys and lay the groundwork for more efficient customs generation. The January 18 COMISAF visit underscored Razzik's key enabling role in this regard, and his calculated approach to working with ISAF.

¶4. (C) To this end, Razzik is not obstructing coalition requirements at the border (or throughout the district) though his longstanding disapproval of a visible ISAF presence in and around the crossing point during daylight hours is well known. (Note: Razzik tells ISAF that the reason for this is that the troops would become targets and result in civilian casualties. However, daylight is also the time of day when commercial traffic and money-making opportunities are at their peak. End note.) He knows that to reject coalition requests would be to engender unwanted ill will by ISAF and, in the near term, there is money to be made in labor and materials at the border and further up Highway 4 where ISAF plans to build a staging area for convoys on land near Razzik's compound and owned by his associate. A January

KABUL 00000467 002.2 OF 003

18 meeting with MG Riley of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provides an insight into his personal calculations: Razzik's main talking point was concern that trucks providing materials to ISAF in Spin Boldak were not locally-owned. It is probably not a coincidence that he himself owns a locally-based trucking fleet.

Abetting the Status Quo

¶5. (C) Contrary to the prevailing narrative of Razzik's unchallenged authority in Spin Boldak, anecdotal evidence

paints a picture of less than harmonious dynamics within Razzik's own Achekzai tribe with regard to the Colonel's prominence. Razzik's immediate predecessor in the ABP, Haji Fida Mohammad (a member of the Tribal Shura and District Development Assembly) does not hide his contempt in public for his nephew. One local account suggests that Razzik did not achieve his position through a tribal consensus but that he was thrust upon Spin Boldak by GIRoA, a view bolstered by the Colonel's reported links to former Governor Sherzai.

District Governance

¶6. (C) At present, the District Government of Spin Boldak is presided over by Haji Abdul Ghani, a Popalzai tribesman and Karzai kinsman. The third District Governor (DG) in two years, Abdul Ghani's predecessor reportedly was removed for offending local sensibilities by pledging to tackle corruption. Abdul Ghani functions in an "acting" capacity, and recently requested coalition assistance to press Kabul to make his appointment permanent. The DG asserts that resolving his status will give him the necessary clout to properly address development needs and tackle corruption. However, the DST's experience to date with the DG does not instill confidence that this is all that is required to improve governance. A broader effort to empower local authority and fill civil service vacancies will be essential to strengthening local governance and reducing the unfettered role of local power brokers in the area. (Note: Reported to have little more than a fourth grade education, DG Abdul Ghani has demonstrated to the DST that what he may lack in managerial capacity he may make up for in other useful character traits. In a November shura in the village of Luy Karez, the DG challenged village elders, support of the

Taliban. As reported in reftel A, the local ABP commander similarly confronted elders in the same shura only to be assassinated soon afterwards. End note.)

¶7. (C) The other pillar of district governance is a two-headed Tribal Shura-District Development Assembly (Shura/DDA), dominated in equal measures by the Noorzai and Achekzai tribes and their most assertive local leaders. Functioning as private clubs, the bodies primarily ensure that donor funds are monopolized by a select group of Spin Boldak notables. The cooperation of the district's two main tribes within this context belie the argument that Razzik's mediation has averted inter-tribal conflict. As Haji Fida Mohammad told the DST in the company of fellow Achekzai and Noorzai Shura/DDA members, "there are some who don't want the tribes to get along," referring to his relative, the ABP chief. Without an empowered District Government, however, there is little check on the self-serving actions of these institutions, which ultimately undermines equitable distribution of development resources in Spin Boldak.

District Development

¶8. (SBU) One consequence of the interests and arrangements underpinning district security is the limited reach of development outside of Spin Boldak center (reftel A). While security, or lack thereof, contributes to the precarious state of many communities in the areas north and south of Highway 4, district government staffing deficiencies and the absence of permanent representatives from ministries critical to district development -- specifically within the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development and the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) -- equally

hamper progress. Not receiving the services they need or the attention they deserve from the government, citizens outside the Highway 4 corridor, particularly in Noorzai tribal areas, do not see themselves as stakeholders in the district's development and thus are more susceptible to intimidation and insurgent propaganda. Razzik regularly spins this potential for the spread of this instability to his advantage in his dealings with the coalition.

KABUL 00000467 003 OF 003

¶9. (SBU) A number of initiatives are underway to remedy the developmental needs of the District and the alienation of its residents. USAID's Afghanistan Vouchers for Increased Production of Agriculture Plus (AVIPA Plus) program, for example, has the potential to play an important role in revitalizing the current state of agriculture in Spin Boldak and, thereby transform perceptions of GIROA. A key component in realizing these end states will be the involvement of empowered local government officials beyond Razziq and the Shura/DDA to enable equitable distribution of resources -- a dynamic that does not currently exist in the district.

Comment

¶10. (C) Colonel Razzik's alleged involvement in the District's illicit trafficking and illegal taxation on transit trade has been widely reported (most recently in a January 19 Washington Post article). His presence, however, need not forestall Spin Boldak's progress nor should it be an accepted excuse for continued neglect and underdevelopment in the district. By accepting the view that Razzik is both the guarantor of district security and the lynchpin in tribal

power relations, we potentially are overlooking steps which could be taken in the near term to improve the overall state of governance and development in the district, short of removing Razzik. Additionally, by ascribing unaccountable authority to Razzik, the coalition unintentionally reinforces his position through its direct and near-exclusive dealings with him on all major issues in Spin Boldak.

¶11. (C) As a first step in remedying the current imbalance of power between Razzik and other GIROA authorities, a public and visible commitment by GIROA to the district's citizens is required. Attracting competent civil servants from key ministries should be a first step. Spin Boldak is among the 80 key terrain districts and likely will be targeted for the District Delivery Program (DDP) by the end of 2010. We will need to carefully manage eventual implementation of the DDP to emplace empowered, competent government personnel and the full complement of line ministry representatives and their respective resources. A carefully managed approach to support the growth of a functioning district government can lay an important foundation for improved governance with or without Razzik.

¶12. (U) This message was drafted at the DST in Spin Boldak and in Kabul.

Eikenberry

Viewing cable 10KABUL503, MULLAH ZAEFF: PEACE NOW A NECESSITY

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
10KABUL503	2010-02-09 10:10	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO3619

PP RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5499

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 000503

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 02/08/2020

TAGS PGOV, PREL, AF

SUBJECT: MULLAH ZAEEF: PEACE NOW A NECESSITY

REF: A. KABUL 0484 B. KABUL 0441

KABUL 00000503 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Acting Deputy Ambassador Joseph A. Mussomeli; Reasons (b) and (d)

¶1. (S) Summary: Former Taliban Ambassador to Pakistan Abdul Salam Zaeef advocates peace as "the only option now" for Afghanistan. While encouraged by the latest attention to achieving peace in Afghanistan, he believes action and sincerity, not talk and good intentions, are required to make progress. He also wants negotiations among all involved parties, including armed Taliban and those who are active within the constitutional order, and that obstacles such as the UN and U.S. "blacklists" must be removed before these talks can start. Zaeef's viewpoint could reflect his annoyance at the pace of reconciliation talks that may have left him on the sidelines. End Summary.

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Negotiations First
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¶2. (S) In a recent meeting on February 8 with former Taliban Ambassador to Pakistan Abdul Salam Zaeef at his modest residence in Kabul's Pashtun-dominant Khush-Haal neighborhood, Zaeef told us he was convinced that there is no longer any other option than peace for Afghanistan: peace is "a requirement" for Afghans, Americans, and the international community at large. However, while encouraged by the latest attention to political settlement in Afghanistan, "talk and good intentions are not enough; rather, action, strategy, and sincerity are required to make progress." In particular, Zaeef expressed skepticism about Karzai's true intentions, because "Karzai is deceiving all sides. "When he sits with me, he tells me he wants the foreign troops to leave, then he tells you he wants them to stay forever, and he tells yet a third story to Islamic leaders of other countries," Zaeef said. Karzai's only clear objective is to remain in power; he thinks the presence of foreign troops will help him do so, opined Zaeef.

¶3. (S) Zaeef posited that the peace process must first start with negotiations among all involved parties, including armed and disarmed Taliban, and that "hurdles" must be removed before entering these talks; only after successful negotiations can reintegration and reconciliation occur, he asserted. To our query regarding which hindrances must be removed, he listed ending the Taliban's isolation by removing them from the UN (1267) and U.S. blacklists (Zaeef continues on the 1267 list) and the cessation of foreign hostilities against the group during the negotiations.

Taliban Saved Afghanistan from Disintegration

¶4. (S) While most Afghans want an end to hostilities, Zaeef said, warlords do not and they were the reason the Taliban seized control of the country to begin with. Without Taliban intervention and its imposition of a strong dictatorship, Afghanistan would have been divided between Pakistan and Iran. Zaeef said when the Taliban seized power, their first priority was to instill order and governance by ruling with a strict hand. They had also tried to establish a central government to defend against "challenges from the region," and had attempted to "clear the country of warlords" who had ruled pieces of the country and had committed horrible human rights abuses. "Unfortunately, we were unable to even achieve our first goal," he lamented. Zaeef insisted that if the Taliban had remained in power, it would have gradually become more moderate.

Taliban Are Not Misogynists

¶5. (S) Like Muttawakil (Ref. A), Zaeef asserted that the Taliban were not misogynists who opposed women's education and the right to work, as long as their actions did not violate Islam. While acknowledging the Taliban made some mistakes, he countered that saving Afghanistan from disintegration far outweighed the Taliban's negative actions. Moreover, now that conditions in Afghanistan had changed, he believed if peace were made with the Taliban, the "old strict rules" would not return. He asserted that Mullah Omar's intention was not to topple the Afghan government; rather he sought reforms to the Constitution and other laws so they could be in accordance with Islam. (Comment: While some "ex-Taliban" assert that the Taliban seek only minor - unspecified - Constitutional revisions, others insist that

KABUL 00000503 002.2 OF 002

the changes must be so far-reaching, such as reversing equal protections for women and elevating Sharia law above other constitutional provisions, that it amounts to a full revision. End Comment.)

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Foreigners Will Never Win A Military Victory
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¶6. (S) Responding to our reference to extreme versus moderate Taliban elements, Zaeef suggested that we should instead differentiate the Taliban by whether they choose force or peace to achieve their objectives. Ultimately, however, the armed Taliban obey the orders of their political leaders; therefore, only a political solution will work, reasoned Zaeef. Furthermore, while Americans have attempted to make the war an international cause, it is "clearly America's war" and the Iranians, Russians, Chinese, and Pakistanis, and even the British, are content for various reasons to see you mired in a quagmire here, he said. Foreigners have never won a military victory in Afghanistan, Zaeef warned.

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Comment
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¶7. (S) Zaeef has been relatively quiet during the government's formulation of the reintegration/reconciliation policy unveiled in London, although he is certainly one of Karzai's informal advisors in this regard and appears to maintain contact with Taliban leadership. He appeared annoyed at not being more engaged in the policy development and also may be waiting less patiently for his delisting in view of the January 25 breakthrough which delisted five other Afghans.

¶8. (S) In a February 5 Inter Press Service (IPS) article by Gareth Porter, titled "Peace Talks May Follow Ex-Taliban Mediators Plan," Porter claimed

that Karzai had personally asked ex-Taliban officials to help start the peace negotiations through a "road map" for a political settlement and mentions Zaeef, Muttawakil, and former Taliban commander Arsullah Rahmani (currently a Parliamentarian) as "ex-Taliban" liaisons. The article also suggests that Mullah Omar may have selected Zaeef as his point of contact for talks with the Americans and NATO and laid down some initial conditions of settlement. Some of those conditions coincide with President Karzai's call at the London Conference for an end to night raids and detentions by foreigners. No matter how reconstituted, the Taliban mentality remains one that many Afghans fear (Ref. B), and the Government of Afghanistan should increase its efforts to assure the whole population that there will be no peace deal at the expense of non-Pashtuns and women's rights. End Comment. Eikenberry

Viewing cable 10KABUL571, NEW CIV-MIL EFFORT TO INFLUENCE BEHAVIOR OF CRIMINAL AND

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10KABUL571	2010-02-15 10:10	2010-12-02 21:09	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kabul

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PP RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

DE RUEHBUL #0571/01 0461050

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5605

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 000571

SIPDIS

E.O. 12598: DECL: 02/15/2020

TAGS PGOV, KJUS, KCOR, PREL, EAID, AF

SUBJECT: NEW CIV-MIL EFFORT TO INFLUENCE BEHAVIOR OF CRIMINAL AND

CORRUPT AFGHAN OFFICIALS

Classified by Acting Deputy Ambassador Joseph A. Mussomeli for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C//REL ISAF) Summary: The first Nexus-Corruption Leadership Board, co-chaired by Coordinating Director for Development and Economic Affairs, Ambassador Wayne, and ISAF J2 (Intel), Major General Flynn, met on February 4 to consider possible courses of action (COAs) that U.S. military and Embassy personnel may employ against criminal and corrupt Afghan officials in an effort to change their behavior. These recommendations were developed through the joint effort of the Embassy's Nexus-Corruption Coordination committee (NCC) and ISAF's Anti-Corruption Task Force (ACTF). The Leadership Board approved three recommendations: (1) to apply a set of minimum COAs against high-profile corrupt officials to signal a change in U.S. policy on corruption; (2) to begin a series of high-level demarches to persuade the Karzai government to follow through on promises to tackle corruption; and (3) to consider at the next Leadership Board meeting recommendations on applying appropriate COAs, including possible law enforcement actions, against three prominent Afghan malign actors in southern Afghanistan: Abdul Razziq, Ahmed Wali Karzai, Asadullah Sherzad. End Summary.

¶2. (C//REL ISAF) The purpose of the NCC is to develop policy recommendations on ways to reduce and combat official corruption and nexus criminal activities (i.e., insurgency, narcotics and criminality). The membership of the NCC includes representatives from U.S. law enforcement agencies, U.S. Treasury, and a cleared American from ISAF. ISAF's ACTF works in partnership with the NCC and the international community (e.g., the UK and the UN) to develop policy goals, prioritize policy towards important malign actors (i.e., corrupt/criminal Afghan officials), and determine appropriate courses of action to change their behavior.

Board Considers Courses of Action (COA) Policy

¶3. (C//REL ISAF) In the first meeting of the Leadership Board, co-chairs Ambassador Wayne and MG Flynn approved the concept of applying non-law enforcement COAs to corrupt officials on a case-by-case basis. Possible COAs can run the spectrum from refusing to appear in a picture with a corrupt official, to cutting off USG funded assistance, to seizing ill-gotten assets, to applying Presidential Proclamation 7750, which prevents the corrupt official and his/her family from obtaining U.S. visas. No COAs are intended to preclude or replace prosecutions when appropriate, but to serve as tools to be considered to alter illicit behavior in addition to prosecution, or when prosecution is not possible or has a low likelihood of success. The policy also provides that no COA is recommended that will hinder, prevent, or interfere with an ongoing criminal investigation or prosecution. However, in many cases, the proposed measure may be as or more effective than law enforcement actions in influencing the conduct of officials involved in corruption or nexus-related activities, particularly at the local level.

¶4. (C//REL ISAF) Ambassador Wayne and MG Flynn also agreed to the recommendation to develop a "basket" of minimum COAs that would be applied as a default to all corrupt officials that are prioritized as persons of interest by NCC and/or ACTF. These minimum COAs include: (1) no public meetings with the official (and no photos), and no high-profile public visits from CODELs and other dignitaries; (2) no giving or receiving of gifts; and (3) restrictions on opportunities for corrupt officials to participate in U.S.-funded training, travel, and speaking engagements. Applying minimum COAs is designed to help change perceptions held by parts of the Afghan public that the U.S. supports, explicitly or implicitly, known corrupt officials.

Positive Incentives for Positive Acts

¶5. (C//REL ISAF) The COA policy approved by the Leadership Board also provides for positive incentives for Afghan officials who have demonstrated that they are not corrupt, who facilitate U.S. efforts and are positive influences in a given province or district. Examples of positive courses of action include recognition for a notable activity, project funding, consideration for training opportunities, media opportunities, etc.

Board Will Consider Application of COAs at Next Meeting

¶6. (C//REL ISAF) The meeting decided that ACTF and NCC will meet prior to the next Leadership Board meeting (convened monthly) to consider intel and law enforcement files assembled on three powerful officials operating in the south of the country who are believed to be corrupt: ABP Commander at Weesh Chaman border crossing Colonel Abdul Razziq, Ahmed Wali Karzai, and Chief of Police Asadullah Sherzad. ACTF and NCC will make a joint policy recommendation on how these officials should be addressed, taking into consideration second and third order effects and the input of military and civilian experts in the field. Ambassador Wayne and MG Flynn will review the

KABUL 00000571 002 OF 002

recommendations at the next Leadership Board meeting, and their decision will be reported septel. They will also consider recommendations on a series of high-level demarches intended to encourage President Karzai to honor his public commitment to fight corruption. (Note: Work on formulating these recommendations is underway. End Note)

Background: NCC, the ACTF, and the Leadership Board

¶7. (C//REL ISAF) The NCC learns of corrupt and criminal actions through regular field reporting, law enforcement and intel activities, policy

meetings, and from international partners. The National Level Civ-Mil Anti-Corruption, Counternarcotics, and Illicit Finance Working Groups also refer information to, receive referrals from, and coordinate actions with the NCC. When incriminating information is obtained about an Afghan official of national prominence, or whose actions have a destabilizing effect on the U.S. mission, the NCC considers possible COAs in cooperation with ISAF's ACTF. NCC members include working level representatives from FBI, DEA, DOJ, POL, SIGAR, Afghan Threat Finance Cell (AFTC), RAO, and Treasury, as well as other U.S. agencies. Cleared Americans from ISAF, IJC J2, CJIATF-NEXUS and targeting staff are also invited to participate.

¶8. (C//REL ISAF) As described above, the NCC will make recommendations to the Leadership Board, comprised of General-level officers from the Embassy and ISAF. Currently, the Leadership Board meetings are co-chaired by CDDEA Ambassador Wayne or Deputy Ambassador Ricciardone and ISAF J2 MG Flynn. The Leadership Board will review recommendations on nexus-related or corruption issues involving situations that could negatively impact the U.S. relationship with key government officials or ministries. At its discretion, the Leadership Board may forward a case up to the Leadership Team, consisting of the U.S. Ambassador and the Commander, U.S. Forces-Afghanistan/Commander ISAF, or their designated representatives. The Leadership Team will review any nexus-corruption report involving a prominent official or having implications that would negatively impact the U.S. relationship with key government officials or ministries. At any time, the Leadership Team may convene meetings to discuss sensitive cases or to review Leadership Board decisions and recommendations as part of the weekly Principals Meeting.

Comment

¶9. (C//REL ISAF) Recognizing the major limitations of law enforcement actions in Afghanistan at this time (due to lack of capacity and lack of political will), this civ-mil effort will use pragmatic courses of action to end tacit American support for corrupt Afghan officials and to attempt to change the illicit behavior of officials and influential Afghans. Given the fluidity of developments on the ground (e.g., rumors of Ahmed Wali Karzai's appointment as Ambassador to Saudi Arabia or Oman, and Abdul Razziq's initiative to form an anti-corruption task force in Spin Boldak), the time is right to determine an appropriate policy for dealing with such officials. End comment.

EIKENBERRY

Viewing cable 10KABUL693, AHMED WALI KARZAI: SEEKING TO DEFINE HIMSELF AS U.S. PARTNER?

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
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10KABUL693	2010-02-25 04:04	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul
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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5873

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

SECRET SECTION 01 of 03 KABUL 000693

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SRAP, SCA/FO, SCA/A, EUR/RPM, INR/B

STATE PASS USAID FOR ASIA/SCAA

USFOR-A FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/25/2020

TAGS: PGOV KCOR KCRM PREL AF

SUBJECT: AHMED WALI KARZAI: SEEKING TO DEFINE HIMSELF AS U.S. PARTNER?

REF: A. (a) KABUL 673

Â¶B. (b) 09 KABUL 3068

Classified By: Interagency Provincial Affairs Deputy Director Hoyt Yee
for Reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

Â¶1. (S//Rel NATO, ISAF) Begin Summary. Senior Civilian Representative (SCR) Frank Ruggiero met one-on-one with Ahmed Wali Karzai (AWK) on February 23. SCR informed AWK that coalition attention will turn to Kandahar in the next phase of Operation Moshtarak (Together) and the United States will play a far greater role in Kandahar on the military and

civilian sides. SCR outlined the coalition governance strategy for Kandahar and cautioned ISAF will seek non-interference by powerbrokers in police matters. AWK discussed the recent capture of Taliban leader Mullah Baradar in Kandahar, district and provincial-level politics, Kandahar economics and security, the role of xxxxxxxxxxxx narcotics, a southern Pashtoon political party, competition with Nangarhar Governor Gulaga Sherzai, and AWK's life in Chicago from 1983-1992. AWK appeared nervous, but eager to engage with a U.S. official. End Summary.

Focus on Kandahar

¶2. (S//Rel NATO, ISAF) SCR told AWK the attention of the Afghan government, with ISAF support, would turn to Kandahar in the months ahead and it was likely this would be predominantly a political contest that would require the leadership from the highest level of the Afghan government. SCR discussed the governance strategy for Kandahar City and surrounding districts. AWK understood the next phase of operation Moshtarak would be on Kandahar and offered his support. SCR responded this would be an Afghan Government-led effort and the coalition would be focusing its resources on building up that capacity. SCR was clear the coalition would not tolerate individuals working at odds to ISAF campaign aims. AWK stated "nobody is that stupid."

Better Security and Economy in Kandahar

¶3. (S//Rel NATO, ISAF) AWK told the SCR that security has improved in Kandahar over the past year. Freedom of movement had increased across the province, he said, citing his

driving to the meeting at Kandahar Airfield with minimum security. AWK said insurgents no longer have the capability to launch large scale attacks; for example, AWK does not fear an insurgent attack on his home. AWK expressed concern about a series of assassinations aimed at Afghan officials and Afghan citizens who work for the coalition in the city, noting this could only be solved by intelligence assets. AWK said economic activity had increased in the Kandahar City area, but noted his belief that President Karzai is largely unaware of these gains. AWK told the President about increased economic activity in Arghandab related to AVIPA Plus and the President was very surprised, he said. AWK said the President did not understand the changing circumstances in the province.

Kandahar Politics Are Local

¶4. (S//Rel NATO, ISAF) AWK said that it was important to get district-level tribal dynamics right to bring stability to Kandahar City and its environs. AWK specifically stated the need to rely on local, village elders to choose representatives to district shuras. This would ensure a representative shura for district level officials, said AWK and pointed to the succession of Arghandab-based Alikozai leader Mullah Naqib. AWK said the Alikozais chose Mullah Naqib's son, Karimullah, to lead the Alikozai. SCR pointed out coalition conventional wisdom that President Karzai had interfered in that process to appoint Karimullah, which led to certain Alikozai elements to support the Taliban in Arghandab. AWK said, unconvincingly, this was not the case. AWK then contradicted himself and said Karimullah, in fact, did not lead the Alikozai, but AWK's deputy at the provincial council Dastegeeri, was the most influential Alikozai in

Kandahar.

Police in the South xxxxxxxxxxxx

¶5. (S//Rel NATO, ISAF) SCR told AWK the coalition would not accept powerbroker interference with the police and used the example of citizens in Marjah telling Marines they would not

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support GIROA due to past xxxxxxxxxxxx abuses xxxxxxxxxxxx Kandahar does not have similar issues of interference with the police, he said, but SCR pressed saying we are aware of a recent incident when the Kandahar governor sought to remove the Panjwa'i chief of police, but someone had intervened to halt that removal. AWK, who is believed to have prevented Governor Weesa from firing the police chief, said the governor had the power to remove police officials and should exercise that authority in Panjwa'i. AWK characterized Governor Weesa as honest and a powerful figure in Kandahar, but he needed to be more aggressive. In the same breath, AWK said he was the most powerful official in Kandahar and could deliver whatever is needed.

Capture of Mullah Baradar

¶6. (S//Rel NATO, ISAF) SCR asked AWK his views on the recent capture in Pakistan of Taliban leader Mullah Baradar. AWK said Pakistan detained Baradar and other Taliban leaders because they were prepared to discuss reintegration with the

Karzai government. Senior Taliban fighters in Pakistan may be prepared to reintegrate, he said, but are forced by the Pakistan Government to continue to fight. AWK said some Afghan Taliban commanders cannot return to Afghanistan because they are on the Joint Priority Effects List (JPEL) and are told by the Pakistanis they must continue to fight or will be turned over to the coalition. It is important to remove such fighters from the JPEL for reintegration to work, he argued, adding that he has been working on the reconciliation issue with the Saudis for two-three years. AWK offered a meeting with SCR and his older brother and former Member of Parliament for Kandahar Kayyum Karzai in the next few weeks to discuss ongoing reintegration discussions with the Saudis.

Drug Trafficker: Where is the Polygraph?

¶7. (S//Rel NATO, ISAF) Unprompted, AWK raised allegations of his involvement in narcotics, telling the SCR that he is willing to take a polygraph anytime, anywhere to prove his innocence and that he has hired an attorney in New York to clear his name. He suggested that the coalition pay mullahs to preach against heroin, which would reduce demand for poppy cultivation. AWK dismissed the narcotics allegations as part of a campaign to discredit him, particularly by the media, saying the allegations are "like a spice added to a dish to make it more enticing to eat."

A Political Party for Southern Pashtuns?

¶8. (S//Rel NATO, ISAF) SCR asked AWK if there are discussions to create a Pashtun-oriented political party in the South.

AWK said such a party would be announced shortly and it would encompass southern Pashtuns from Herat to Kandahar; Tajiks also would be represented. AWK said Afghans are reluctant to join political parties because they are associated with the communist party and Islamic fundamentalist movements, like the Taliban. He added that he could not be part of another election because he had to personally manage promises to hundreds of thousands of voters in the last election.

Gulaga Sherzai: Competitor

¶9. (S//Rel NATO, ISAF) SCR raised the recent 1,500 person shura co-hosted by AWK and Sherzai in Kandahar City (Reftel B). AWK said Sherzai was not to be trusted, but he was willing to work with him on a peace jirga to deliver peace to the south. AWK passionately presented his history of working with the United States since 2001 and told the SCR that he could deliver anything needed.

Missing Wrigley

¶10. (SBU//Rel NATO, ISAF) Further emphasizing his links to the United States, AWK fondly recalled his days in Chicago as a restaurant owner close to Chicago's Wrigley Field. His

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restaurant was a hub for American in the Midwest who had worked or lived in Afghanistan prior to the Soviet invasion, he said.

Comment

¶11. (S//Rel NATO, ISAF) AWK was eager to engage and rarely stopped talking in the two hour meeting. While he presented himself as a partner to the United States and is eager to be seen as helping the coalition, he also demonstrated that he will dissemble when it suits his needs. He appears not to understand the level of our knowledge of his activities, and that the coalition views many of his activities as malign, particularly relating to his influence over the police. We will need to monitor his activity closely, and deliver a recurring, transparent message to him of where are redlines are and what we expect of him in the months ahead.

Ricciardone

Viewing cable 10KABUL699, PRESSING KARZAI FOR ELECTORAL REFORM

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
10KABUL699	2010-02-26 11:11	2010-12-02 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO4127

OO RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL

DE RUEHBUL #0699/01 0571138

ZNY SSSSS ZZH

O 261138Z FEB 10

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5887

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE

RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 04 KABUL 000699

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 02/25/2020

TAGS PGOV, PREL, AF

SUBJECT: PRESSING KARZAI FOR ELECTORAL REFORM

REF: A. KABUL 645 B. KABUL 692

Classified By: Ambassador Karl Eikenberry, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (S) Summary: Ambassador Eikenberry and Deputy Ambassador Ricciardone demarched President Karzai and his inner circle on the problems of the final version of the electoral decree February 24-25, stressing the need for an independent Electoral Complaints Commission with international commissioners, protection of the vetting process, and change in Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) leadership. They cautioned that a successful U.S. visit hangs in the balance. End Summary.

To the Advisors: Protect Democracy and the Relationship

¶2. (S) On February 24, Deputy Ambassador Ricciardone separately called on Presidential Chief of Staff Omer Daudzai, Education Minister (recently named as the Peace Jirga coordinator) Farouk Wardak and Agriculture Minister Rahimi. Ricciardone made the following points with each:

-- the election issue is a potential spoiler to a successful U.S. trip - and fixing it should be an urgent priority. Worse, it threatens to turn 2010 back into 2009 - derailing the strategic course agreed on and established from Karzai's inauguration through the London conference. -- for elections to be credible the ECC and IEC cannot be seen to be in the pocket of the President. -- what matters now is how Karzai acts on the IEC, ECC and candidate vetting process.

He left a non-paper (para 15) with Daudzai and Wardak, who promised to raise this issue "the Afghan way."

¶3. (S) Daudzai made excuses for having "omitted the import of the decree," which we had raised with him prospectively on February 8. He said it had been discussed in the Cabinet but gotten changed before its final presentation. He had spoken to Karzai-supporting Parliamentarians who were concerned about it and had told them to make their concerns public so the President understands. Ricciardone noted Parliament is confused over its right to review the decree, and this adds to our concerns about undue

expansion of the President's powers. Daudzai said he would add further Palace signals to Parliamentary leadership that they are empowered to review the decree. Ricciardone reiterated that this issue could undermine the prospective Karzai trip to the U.S. by compelling Karzai to explain and defend his actions at every turn, rather than focusing on the strategic opportunities and challenges ahead of us in 2010. Karzai must act in the next week or so (on the items cited above) in order to remove U.S. and Afghan concerns over the meaning of the decree. Daudzai alluded elliptically to his dinner meeting the previous evening with Minister of Interior Atmar and other supporters of the President who shared "serious concerns" about Karzai's actions.

¶4. (S) Minister of Education Wardak agreed that the decree gives Karzai's critics the evidence they want that he is not committed to democracy, and that it posed a serious problem in Karzai's standing abroad as well as at home. Ricciardone noted that Afghan democracy would look different from other versions but that the foundation has to be based on credible institutions. He reiterated the need for changes at the IEC, a "genuinely independent" ECC, and a vetting process which can ensure no unreconstructed Taliban are eligible for office. Wardak agreed with these points and claimed that our "inseparable partnership" would be greatly served by a good U.S. visit. He promised to go directly to the President and to press Karzai to withdraw the decree in its entirety, and "improve it" before it is resubmitted. Frankly, Wardak said, this behavior was comparable to the power-grabs of the mujahedin in 1991-1992 - and he and Zakhilwal had already protested against it.

¶5. (S) On February 25, Ambassador Eikenberry called on Minister of Finance Omer Zakhilwal who told him that he could "almost guarantee" that he could persuade Karzai to act as we had urged regarding the ECC, candidate vetting, and Ludin's replacement. He affirmed that the Ambassador was pursuing this agenda in the best way, by approaching Karzai clearly but respectfully and then allowing his inner circle of Ministers to prod him in the right direction. Zakhilwal noted that he was then meeting with Parliamentarians on the issue of the Presidential decree and that he was building support and a case for the points that Eikenberry had raised.

¶6. (S) Apparently echoing Daudzai, Zakhilwal went on to speak

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candidly about Karzai, saying that he was an "extremely weak man" who did not listen to facts but was instead easily swayed by anyone who came to him to report even the most bizarre stories of plots against him. Whenever this happened, Karzai would immediately judge the person to be loyal and would reward him. He warned against former FM Spanta pursuing his narrow self-interest at the expense of national ones, but in general affirmed to Eikenberry that the "inner circle" -- now including Daudzai -- had decided they must collaborate to influence Karzai when they see him going astray on such matters. They reportedly pledged that if Karzai took umbrage at them raising such sensitive issues, they would defend each other.

Message to Karzai: Donâ€™t Put Success on the Line

¶7. (S) Meeting with Karzai, National Security Advisor Spanta and Deputy NSA Spinzada February 25, Ambassador Eikenberry asked Karzai what he wanted his trip to be about and how he wanted it to be perceived in the United States. He said he hoped it has become obvious to Karzai that the U.S. wants Karzai and Afghanistan to be strong. Eikenberry noted that the success of the visit would require that Americans to gain confidence that we have a reliable partner who is leading Afghanistan forward.

¶8. (S) Eikenberry went on to explain that democracy-building in Afghanistan could be among Karzai,s strongest legacies to the future and what he will be remembered for; and democracy promotion is in Americaâ€™s â€œDNAâ€ and how we judge institutional strength in any country. Reminding Karzai of the political risks our own President took on December 1 when he announced his strategy of deepened engagement in Afghanistan in the face of very real domestic opposition, Eikenberry pointed out that Karzai has always reminded us of Afghanistanâ€™s domestic politics -- now it is his turn to be aware of American domestic politics.

¶9. (S) At this point, before the planned one-on-one session, Karzai said he wanted Spanta to remain present. However, Spanta demurred, apparently sensing a difficult message would follow. Alone with Karzai, the Ambassador told Karzai that we want his visit to be about long-term strategic and political issues, including Karzai,s political vision and reintegration/reconciliation. It should lead us towards a stronger Afghanistan and a stronger Karzai. Eikenberry said that the sooner Karzai addresses pressing issues like electoral reform, the sooner he can remove distractions from his agenda in Washington. If he did nothing before his departure to allay our concerns about his decree and intent on electoral reform, he wouldnâ€™t be able to talk about reintegration and reconciliation with Congress, with the media, or with anyone in Washington. Karzai said he wanted to speak in Washington about â€œcivilian casualtiesâ€ but then added the long-term, strategic partnership as well.

¶10. (S) Karzai appeared more attentive and Eikenberry went into greater detail. He said that the election is very important for us and that if Americans and our allies believe that Karzai is weakening in the building of democratic legitimacy in Afghanistan, our support inevitably will weaken. He urged Karzai to make and announce well before departing for Washington the needed changes regarding the Chair of the IEC, placing internationals on the ECC, and retaining internationals from UNAMA and ISAF as observers on the candidate vetting board (DIAG). He asked Karzai if he had anyone else in mind for the IEC Chair. Karzai said he did not and that he couldnâ€™t make a â€œquick decisionâ€ about it. Eikenberry suggested that he could easily make an announcement prior to his visit to Washington about having accepted Ludin,s resignation and having begun a talent search for Ludin,s replacement.

Karzai agreed that that was something he "could" do and said he would meet with Ludin on February 27.

¶11. (S) Eikenberry continued that Karzai could also announce before his trip that he would be appointing two internationals to the ECC to which Karzai, apparently confused about the law, said he could not make this announcement now, he could only form the ECC three months before the election date. The Ambassador told Karzai he was mistaken on this point (according to the new Presidential decree, the ECC must be established no later than three months before the election date. There is no injunction against establishing it earlier than that.) Karzai alleged that the ECC had tried to "steal the election" and had not performed well in the Provincial Council audits. Eikenberry replied that while the ECC had not performed perfectly, looking to the future with some high-quality international commissioners (such as Justice Kriegler) was very important.

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He added that the IEC had performed poorly, a point Karzai agreed with.

¶12. (S) He then asked Karzai to keep UNAMA and ISAF on the candidate vetting commission as observers. He pointed out that there are a lot of very bad actors who want political power and that it was always good to have impartial internationals available to be the ones drawing the line against those people. Karzai challenged the Ambassador on the grounds that the USG pays the contracts of some of these "bad actors" to which the Ambassador responded that while that was a fair point, it didn't mean Karzai shouldn't keep UNAMA on the candidate vetting commission.

¶13. (S) The Ambassador then pointed out to Karzai that the appointment of independent internationals on these electoral bodies could be helpful to Karzai politically: if Karzai appointed every official involved, he would be the one blamed entirely for an election which will certainly be flawed. Eikenberry noted again that this was Karzai's legacy and would be judged by future generations, and then asked Karzai if he was really completely positive that Afghanistan and its institutions are strong enough to not need any foreigners playing any roles. Karzai ended the meeting by saying that Ludin had told him he wanted to step down. Eikenberry replied that that was good and once more pressed Karzai to ensure the ECC Commissioners are independent, reminding him that Karzai had separately told SRSG Eide and Eikenberry several weeks prior unambiguously that he would retain two foreigners on the ECC in accordance with a formula developed by Eide.

¶14. (S) Comment: We will continue our engagement over the next several days with key Karzai ministers supportive of pragmatic electoral reform, as well as with interested Parliamentarians. As noted above, Minister Zakhilwal told Ambassador Eikenberry he would rally like-minded ministers and attempt to reach a favorable outcome by Monday. The electoral reform issue provides a good test of the future potential and limits of Karzai as a partner. U.S. interests, the imperatives of Afghan-statebuilding, and Afghanistan's long-term developmental interests will occasionally require Karzai to make difficult choices. This is such an instance. Also to be validated is his

coterie of reform-minded ministers' ability to adroitly manage Karzai behind closed doors as occurred during his decision to accept a second round in last fall's election. A strong, empowered group of such ministers will be crucial to U.S.-Afghan success in the months ahead.

¶15. (U) Begin non-paper text:

Electoral Reform

President Karzai made a firm commitment at the London Conference to put in place meaningful electoral reforms which reflect lessons learned from 2009 and to ensure measures are in place to tackle the electoral abuses witnessed last year. Strengthening the independence of the Independent Elections Commission (IEC) and the Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC) is vital to ensuring that these institutions are impartial and effective.

The following three key measures are essential to ensuring the credibility of the Parliamentary electoral process and the success of the future Parliament, an institution integral to strengthening Afghanistan's democracy. They are also measures that will enable the international community to convince their governments to help fund and otherwise support these and future elections.

-- Replacing the IEC chair with an independent and qualified official --
Maintaining the integrity of the ECC through a combination of independent Afghans and international experts --
Establishing a strong candidate vetting process that involves the participation of both Afghans and the international community

The following key reforms would represent important steps towards constructive electoral reform that draw on the lessons learned in 2009:

-- IEC staff committing or complicit in electoral offenses are dismissed --
IEC sessions are opened to accredited observers --
IEC-recommended fraud deterrence plans are implemented --
A comprehensive Ministry of Interior and IEC-endorsed security plan is established 60-90 days before the election --
Polling stations are announced at least 90 days before elections --
Conditions are in place to maximize the participation of

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women and vulnerable groups in elections, both as candidates and voters --
Domestic observers and political party agents are supported and their participation in election day activities is facilitated.

End non-paper text. RICCIARDONE

Viewing cable 07KABUL185, BOUCHER, MOSBACHER AND KARZAI TALK ENERGY,

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
07KABUL185	2007-01-20 12:12	2010-11-30 21:09	SECRET//NOFORN	Embassy Kabul

VZCZCXRO3684

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5559

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHMFSS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

RHMFSS/COMSOCCENT MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 3537

Saturday, 20 January 2007, 12:35

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 05 KABUL 000185

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR SCA/FO DAS GASTRIGHT, SCA/A, SCA/CEN, S/CRS,

SA/PB, S/CT,

EUR/RPM

STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG

STATE PASS TO OPIC DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF DULCE ZAHNISER

NSC FOR AHARRIMAN

OSD FOR KIMMITT

CENTCOM FOR CFC-A, CG CJTF-76, POLAD, JICCENT

EO 12958 DECL: 01/20/2017

TAGS PREL, PGOV, PTER, ASEC, MARR, AF, PK

SUBJECT: BOUCHER, MOSBACHER AND KARZAI TALK ENERGY,

INVESTMENT, PAKISTAN AND COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY

Classified By: A/DCM Sara Rosenberry for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

SUMMARY

¶1. (S/NF) On January 10, Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs Richard Boucher and Overseas Private Investment Corporation President and Chief Executive Officer Robert Mosbacher met with President Karzai. Mosbacher briefed Karzai on the Investment Corporation's projects in Afghanistan, focusing on energy projects, credit programs, and the 209-room Marriott Hotel planned for Kabul. Boucher called on both Afghan and Pakistani Jirga Commissions to meet as soon as possible. Karzai is doing everything he can to make the jirgas work. The President expressed his opposition to Pakistani mining and fencing of the border and suggested that Pakistan close madrassas and terrorist training camps if it was really serious about terrorism. Karzai wants to rid himself of the Bugti problem but argued that the Bugtis were not terrorists. Boucher briefed on requested budget funding for Afghanistan. He encouraged acceptance of ground spraying of poppy crops in Helmand. Karzai was non-committal and pointed to British reluctance. Karzai believes that 2007 will be a better year for Afghanistan and called for better preparations to show the people that we were ready for the spring offensive. END SUMMARY

Overseas Private Investment Corporation Projects in Afghanistan

¶2. (SBU) President Karzai began by noting that electricity was becoming increasingly important for Afghanistan. Electric power from Afghanistan, neighbors was unreliable and countries like Uzbekistan were raising prices, he said. Mosbacher briefed Karzai on his meetings in Kabul on electricity and other projects. He said new power capacity and building private sector development were key. If and when the legal structure for independent power production was established, the Investment Corporation would be able to help with more financing.

¶3. (SBU) In response to a question from Karzai about projects being considered, Mosbacher explained that industrial consumers were paying too much for electricity. These entities would be good customers for new electricity projects since households were not paying enough to support new investment. At the end of March, the utility industry would be corporatized, but a consistent set of rules will be needed to set a framework for independent power production. Any private power project would take 18-24 months from the time the legal framework was established. Karzai thought this was too long. Mosbacher explained that huge pieces of equipment needed to be brought in, which takes time. They would be run by heavy fuel oil, but natural gas was best as it was a fraction of the cost of diesel. In addition, laws needed to be passed before investment could begin.

¶4. (SBU) Mosbacher explained that other Investment Corporation projects included a 209-room, four-star Marriott Hotel. The project was on track but outstanding problems on the lease needed to be resolved. He expected that construction could start in the spring and with an opening within 18-24

months. Much of the material and labor will be sourced in Afghanistan. The hotel will employ 400 people.

¶5. (SBU) Mosbacher briefed that his organization was also going to be providing small and medium-sized business credits for agricultural and manufacturing facilities, through a new commercial and a non-bank lending institution. These two

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projects could start in 6-9 months.

Cross-Border Jirgas

¶6. (C) President Karzai said that Afghanistan had done everything it could on the jirgas, e.g., providing lists and documents to Pakistan. Prime Minister Aziz explained during his visit that a Commission would soon be appointed. Assistant Secretary Boucher urged that both sides get their Commissions together as the next step, the sooner the better. He suggested it shouldn't be too difficult to work out the local versus national versions of the jirgas and pledged U.S. and international support. Karzai reiterated that he was doing everything he could. Boucher stated that he would nudge the Pakistanis on the jirgas and hoped the Foreign Minister and Prime Minister-level meetings would continue.

¶7. (C) Karzai described Aziz as a "good man," someone he could talk to openly and frankly. Aziz had the intellectual capacity to talk through the issues. Karzai hoped the U.S. could influence the Pakistanis on the jirgas. Boucher noted that Speaker Quanooni had been invited to Pakistan and Karzai said he would encourage him to go.

Border Mining and Fencing

¶8. (C) The Assistant Secretary relayed press reports that Pakistan may be reconsidering its proposal for selective mining and fencing of the border. The U.S. had been encouraging Pakistan to use the tripartite meetings to deal with such issues. Karzai said there was speculation that Pakistan was clamping down on the Taliban and the insurgency on the border as a pretext to get to the Balochi refugees who were crossing the border. He observed that there was much domestic pressure in Pakistan against mining and fencing. Boucher interpreted the move as a sign of Pakistani frustration and that Pakistan was taking the border problem seriously. Karzai rebutted that they could close madrassas and training centers if they were really serious about terrorism. Pakistan just needed to check its own intelligence.

¶9. (C) Karzai noted that some in the Pakistani media were calling for jihad against the United States. He expected more bloodshed in 2007. Assistant Secretary Boucher replied that the Pakistani media said many things but it was important to look at the actual situation on the border. For example, in November, there was actually a decrease in infiltration from North Waziristan, although the reason is unclear. Karzai explained that the media in the region was not like that in the West, as it was easily manipulated by governments. Both the Pakistani and Afghan governments knew well how to use the media.

¶10. (C) Boucher told Karzai that the United States believed that Pakistan was now doing more on terrorism. He pointed to an increase in arrests of more

Taliban and the recent attack on a madrassa in the Bajaur Agency. Boucher acknowledged, however, that some Pakistani authorities also turned a blind eye to infiltrators. He said we needed to keep reminding them of their responsibilities. Karzai responded that we needed to keep reminding them to give up the Pakistani dream of a larger Islamic Pakistani Emirate. Boucher conveyed the United States, view that both Musharraf and Aziz knew well the dangers of not cracking down on terrorism. He said events in North Waziristan have scared them and they now fear they could lose control. Boucher agreed that we needed to see swifter action by Pakistani authorities, but we should not doubt their commitment.

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Bugti

¶11. (S/NF) Assistant Secretary Boucher asked Karzai if he knew where Bugti was. Karzai responded that a lot of Bugtis come to Afghanistan. In fact, over 200, with their sons and money, have come. Karzai said he advised them to go the United Nations for asylum, but many were frightened and are in hiding. The United Nations declined to deal with the issue, considering it too sensitive. Karzai said he was "not interested in having them in Afghanistan as it was too much trouble."

¶12. (S/NF) In his meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Aziz, Karzai had said that the Bugtis were not terrorists and represented nobility in Afghanistan, so it would be hard to turn them over to Pakistan. Boucher clarified that it was the grandson that the Pakistanis were after for instigating an uprising. Karzai responded that fomenting uprising does not make one a terrorist. The real terrorists were Bin Laden and Mullah Omar. Afghanistan needs a sign that Pakistan will stop supporting these terrorists. Boucher asked Karzai which side should move first and queried whether Afghanistan could take the grandson into custody or strike some political deal. Karzai explained that the Bugtis would blame the United States if Afghanistan turned them in. There would be disgust toward both Afghanistan and the United States.

¶13. (S/NF) Boucher asked Karzai if he could assure Pakistan that the Bugtis were not supporting armed struggle and that India was not involved. Karzai said "yes", though he doubted Pakistan would accept his assurances. Pakistan would continue to think India is involved. There is a lot of misinformation out there, Karzai commented. He said he knew Bugti, who was highly respected in the U.S. Karzai explained that Bugti had once tried to call Karzai but he had refused for the sake of good relations with Pakistan. Now he cannot forgive himself for refusing. Karzai assessed that Pakistan had troubles with many other tribes too, as a result of its trying to divide and conquer and turn the tribes against each other. Pakistan needed to address the bigger picture, Karzai urged. (Note: Halfway through the discussion of Bugti, Karzai signaled that the issue was too sensitive and asked that notetaking be suspended. End Note)

New U.S. Funding

¶14. (C) Assistant Secretary Boucher briefed Karzai in broad terms on new funding for Afghanistan that we expect to come from a supplemental budget. In addition to an increase in U.S. funding we were working toward, a series of international meetings would focus on funding and other needs for Afghanistan

)- the NATO Foreign Ministers meeting, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board Political Directors meeting in Berlin, and the G-8. The United States will be pushing countries to commit to funding where it is needed most. He reported that Presidential Senior Economic Advisor Naderi had agreed to attend a series of meetings to brief on where the money was most needed.

¶15. (C) Boucher explained that several key elements should move forward to support the new money, namely the Presidential Appointments Commission, improved governance, continuation of the Policy Action Group process (which he said was working well), more government presence around the country such as the Presidential Policy Action Group visit to Kandahar, and dealing with corruption. Karzai expressed his disappointment with the Policy Action Group, asking "What is

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it doing?" He said that when displaced people from Kandahar have been returned and when the youth in the South have jobs, then he will be able to declare that the Policy Action Group was working. ¶16. (C) On corruption, Karzai called for corrupt people to be punished and to simplify the procedures for doing so. On governance, he believed that the situation was much better than three years ago. Most governors were competent and knew what was going on in their provinces. Karzai felt that the Government of Afghanistan was much more in charge than three years ago. He said the police were better and were becoming more linked to other police in other regions. Organization and training had much improved.

¶17. (C) Boucher said that the supplemental budget would allow for an expanded target for police expansion and stepped up training. He shared that the budget would be more than the normal USD 3 billion, but possibly broken up between 2007 and 2008, with the police and military portion showing up in 2007. The money would focus on more training equipment, road construction, power grids, and provincial judicial systems. Boucher said that the final figures would be out in a few weeks, possibly around the time of the State of Union Address. Secretary Rice would make an announcement at the NATO Foreign Ministers meeting. More details will emerge in February.

Strategic Dialogue

¶18. (C) Assistant Secretary Boucher apologized that scheduling programs had prevented the travel of Under Secretary Burns for the Strategic Dialogue meeting. With the

SIPDIS expected arrival of Deputy Secretary Negroponte, Burns'™ schedule should become more flexible, he said. Boucher underlined that Burns was keenly interested in the Strategic Dialogue. Karzai said it would send an important signal.

United Kingdom, Helmand and Poppy

¶19. (C) Karzai asked if the United States was "fine with the UK in Helmand? Are they up to something?" Boucher responded that the British were trying to do a good job and were focused on Helmand. Karzai said they need to know that Helmand is part of a bigger picture. Boucher agreed and said it was important to get other countries to look at the country as a whole and to

promote national authority, not just focus on the regions where they are operating.

¶16. Boucher said that everyone needed to accept ground spraying of poppy in Helmand. Karzai stated that the United Kingdom would not accept it. Boucher urged Karzai to focus on poppy this year to show our seriousness in the most serious of places, Helmand. Karzai reported that Helmand Governor Wafa complained that the British were willing to do eradication only in areas where there was government control, but that we needed to eradicate where the Taliban were. Boucher urged Karzai to consider a pilot project in Helmand and offered to approach the British if necessary. Boucher said that he would be meeting his British counterpart soon and would raise the issue.

Spring Offensive

¶17. Karzai believes that 2007 will be a better year but called for better preparations to deal with the spring offensive. We need to show the people that we are prepared, he said. Boucher stated that the spring offensive must be "our offensive" and that we need to hit the Taliban hard

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before they can come at us. He commented that all of us were better prepared this year.

¶18. Karzai asked Boucher to convey to Prime Minister Aziz how grateful he was for his recent visit to Afghanistan. He also noted that he enjoyed Boucher's recent meeting with him in Turkmenistan and he hopes to be the first visitor to Ashgabat after the upcoming election.

¶19. SCA Senior Advisor Caitlin Hayden cleared this cable.

NEUMANN

Viewing cable 09KABUL3161, PAKISTANIS AT KANDAHAR BORDER FLAG MEETING -- THE

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09KABUL3161	2009-10-07 06:06	2010-11-30 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Kabul

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INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 003161

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CHANGED CLASSIFICATION TO SECRET)

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SRAP, SCA/FO, SCA/A, EUR/RPM
STATE PASS USAID FOR ASIA/SCAA
USFOR-A FOR POLAD

EO 12958 DECL: 09/27/2019

TAGS PGOV, PREL, MOPS, UK, AF, PAK

SUBJECT: PAKISTANIS AT KANDAHAR BORDER FLAG MEETING -- THE
QUETTA SHURA IS A FABRICATION
KABUL 00003161 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Interagency Provincial Affairs Deputy Coordinator Hoyt Yee for
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (S) Summary. The high point of the September 29 Border Flag Meeting (BFM) in Kandahar was the Pakistani delegation leader's assertion that the Quetta Shura is an unsubstantiated fabrication. This BFM was the first at which the 5/2 Stryker Brigade joined officials from Canadian Task Force Kandahar, the Afghan Border Police, and the Pakistani military. The Canadians had a specific border cooperation agenda, the Afghans were more interested in insurgent interdiction, and the Pakistani side did not give either much importance. The next BFM on November 17 will be one among several opportunities for the U.S. to give AF-PAK border issues in the South -- especially reducing Taliban sanctuary in Pakistan -- the serious attention that they deserve. End Summary.

¶2. (S) The high point of the September 29 Border Flag Meeting in Kandahar was Pakistani delegation leader BG Sajjad's assertion that the Quetta Shura is an unsubstantiated fabrication. When pressed, Sejaad expanded on his position, saying that the Americans had fallen victim to rumors and adding that Pakistani security authorities have more than 80 patrols and checkpoints in Quetta every day and every night, and if there were any Taliban leaders around they would know about them. In a similar vein, he insisted that

Taliban infiltration into Afghanistan from Pakistan was negligible, and that the group should be more concerned about terrorists and narcotics moving in the other direction. Recent press reporting on U.S. concerns about the Taliban presence in Baluchistan did not figure directly in the meeting.

¶3. (S) This BFM was the first in several months, and the first at which U.S. representatives from the 5/2 Stryker Brigade, including the commander, joined officials from Canadian Task Force Kandahar, the Afghan Border Police, and the Pakistani military. TFK Commander BG Jonathan Vance chaired the meeting, and the dynamics between the Afghan and Pakistani sides were so poor it was apparent that the session would have degenerated into acrimony without his multiple diplomatic interventions. The Canadian presentation was intended to advance border cooperation and associated projects based on the Dubai Process, covering the new Joint Border Coordination Center in Spin Boldak, progress with truck surveillance equipment, satellite phones, and construction of a new border facilities at the Weiche crossing to begin in 2010 (maybe).

¶4. (S) Afghan Border Police 3rd Zone Deputy Commander Col. Sharif was more interested in insurgent interdiction, and credited Blackwater training for the detailed list of seizures that included, among other things, 20 radios, 450 meters of wire, 800 detonators, and 62 prisoners. When Col. Sharif suggested that combined AF-PAK border operations would be the best way to demonstrate true willingness to cooperate, BG Vance reminded the group that policy was to focus on communications and confidence building measures through the JBCC.

¶5. (S) The Pakistanis essentially rebutted each Canadian point with a complaint or counter-point: 1) the Iridium phones were useless for cross-border communications, because the system was always busy; 2) they would not send any personnel for training on the Canadian-supplied truck surveillance equipment until they received a timeline of when the equipment would be operational; 3) it did not make sense to begin construction on a new border crossing facility when the Afghans kept the current Friendship Gate locked, and all traffic had to go around the side; and 4) they would make no commitment when Pakistani officers would actually arrive to man the JBCC. For their presentation, the Pakistanis displayed a map slide with 171 border stations between the southern edge of the FATA and Iran to demonstrate the excellent control they maintain on their side, along with another listing nine ISAF aircraft border incursions in the past two months with exact duration and meters of penetration, for which they demanded an accounting.

¶6. (S) The participants agreed in principle that the next BFM would take place on November 17 in Chaman on the Pakistani side. The agenda is to include an update on the JBCC, a 5/2 Stryker brief on their forces array near the, a TFK operations and intelligence brief on Kandahar, and an accounting of ISAF air incursions.

Comment

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¶7. (S) The November 17 BFM will be one among several opportunities for the U.S. to give AF-PAK border issues in the South the serious attention that they deserve.

Bio notes

¶8. (S) There were eight Pakistanis in the delegation, three regular army and five Frontier Corps Pishin Scouts. BG Sejaad, who said he had been deputy zone commander for two months, gave the impression that he spoke with the authority of Islamabad when discussing terrorists and the Taliban. He also mentioned that he had attended NBC training in Germany prior to the first Pakistan nuclear tests. COL Shahzada, a Pashtu-speaking brigade commander from Quetta was the next most senior officer. The Canadians said three ISI officers were among the Pishin Scouts. EIKENBERRY