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PTQ5818

RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(C), 1.4(D)

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	M-00	NEA-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01
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	SSO-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	FMP-00	SNIS-00	NISC-00
	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRME-01	DRL-09	G-00	/030W	

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O 121215Z AUG 97
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9180
INFO AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY
USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL
AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE
AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMEMBASSY RIYADH
AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
DIA WASHDC
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMCONSUL LAHORE
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ISLAMABAD 006827

DEPT FOR SA/PAB AND EUR/CEN; PARIS FOR POL:RAVELING; CENTCOM ALSO
FOR POLAD; ABU DHABI PLEASE PASS TO DUBAI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 8/11/07

TAGS: PREL, PGOV, AF, PK

SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: STRAIGHT TALK WITH [REDACTED]

B1

REF: ISLAMABAD 6503

CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR THOMAS W. SIMONS, JR. REASONS: 1.5
(C), (D).

1. (C) SUMMARY: TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE AMBASSADOR'S PRESENCE AT
THE MINISTRY ON OTHER BUSINESS AUGUST 11, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] BRIEFED HIM ON THE GOP'S ONGOING SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY
IN AFGHANISTAN, AFFIRMING THAT PAKISTAN'S GOAL IS TO "PROMOTE
INTRA-AFGHAN DIALOGUE" AND SET THE STAGE FOR GREATER UN SUCCESS IN
AFGHANISTAN. THE AMBASSADOR SUGGESTED THAT THE GOP KEEP BOTH THE
UN AND THE U.S. MORE FULLY INFORMED ON THE INITIATIVE, NOTING HIS
CONCERN OTHERWISE THAT AT SOME FUTURE POINT THE GOP MIGHT SIMPLY
DUMP ITS PRODUCT IN ONE OR THE OTHER OF OUR LAPS TO CARRY OVER THE
GOAL LINE. [REDACTED] SAID HE WAS "GLAD" THE UNSYG WAS SENDING
LAKHDAR BRAHIMI TO HELP ON AFGHANISTAN, NOTING THAT CURRENT UNSMA
HEAD NORBERT HOLL "HAS NOT BEEN VERY HELPFUL." THE AMBASSADOR
OBSERVED THAT WHILE BRAHIMI'S COMING MAY SIGNAL THAT THE PROCESS IS
NOT WORKING, PAKISTAN WOULD DO WELL NOT TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION OF
EAGERNESS CONCERNING A CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP OF THE UN MISSION ON
AFGHANISTAN, AS THIS WOULD FUEL SUSPICIONS PAKISTAN IS AGAINST HOLL
FOR BEING ANTI-TALIBAN. HE SUGGESTED THAT PAKISTAN AND THE UN

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MISSION WERE UNDER SUSPICION OF "CONTRARY CRIMES" -- FOR AND
AGAINST TALIBAN -- AND SHOULD THEREFORE WORK TOGETHER TO BALANCE
THEM OUT. WE THINK OUR MESSAGE GOT THROUGH TO [REDACTED] THOUGH IT

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REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER GOP ZEAL TO BE RID OF HOLL IS IN FACT CONTAINABLE; AND OF COURSE THE LARGER QUESTION OF WHETHER THE GOP CAN ORGANIZE ITSELF FOR COHERENT ACTION ON AFGHANISTAN IS STILL OPEN. END SUMMARY.

 SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY

2. (C) AFTER RECEIVING JOINT DEMARCHES ON COUNTERTERRORISM CONVENTIONS AND THE KASHMIR HOSTAGE CRISIS (SEPTELS, NOTAL), [REDACTED] ASKED THE AMBASSADOR TO STAY BEHIND [REDACTED] TO DISCUSS OTHER ISSUES. FOCUSING ON AFGHANISTAN, [REDACTED] SAID HE WANTED THE U.S. "FULLY IN THE PICTURE" ON WHAT PAKISTAN IS TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH THROUGH ITS ONGOING SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY IN AFGHANISTAN. DESCRIBING THE SHUTTLE EFFORT AS "VERY DIFFICULT," HE SAID PAKISTAN'S OBJECTIVE IS TO "PROMOTE INTRA-AFGHAN DIALOGUE." SPECIFICALLY, HE CONTINUED, PAKISTAN SEEKS TO PROMOTE PROSPECTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL UN ROLE IN AFGHANISTAN, NOTING THAT ANY INTRA-AFGHAN DIALOGUE WOULD BE UNDER UN AUSPICES -- "PAKISTAN DOES NOT SEEK ANY KUDOS FOR ITSELF FROM THIS EFFORT." [REDACTED] ADDED THAT HE HOPED THE U.S. WOULD "SHELVE ITS POLICY OF INDIFFERENCE IN AFGHANISTAN AND GET MORE DIRECTLY INVOLVED."

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 SHAMSHAD: "GLAD BRAHIMI IS COMING."

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3. (C) TURNING TO THE UPCOMING VISIT TO THE REGION BY UNSYG REPRESENTATIVE LAKHDAR BRAHIMI, [REDACTED] SAID THE GOP IS "GLAD" THAT THE SECRETARY GENERAL IS SENDING SOMEONE ELSE TO WORK WITH THE AFGHANISTAN PROBLEM, NOTING THAT UN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE NORBERT HOLL "HAS NOT BEEN VERY HELPFUL." [REDACTED] SAID HE HOPED BRAHIMI WOULD MAKE CONTACT WITH ALL THE FACTIONS, SINCE THERE CAN BE NO SOLUTION UNLESS ALL FACTIONS ARE A PARTY TO IT. [REDACTED] SAID THE GOP WOULD EXTEND "UTMOST COOPERATION" TO BRAHIMI.

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ON COMPLETING A PAKISTANI FAIT ACCOMPLI

4. (C) EXPRESSING HIS GRATITUDE FOR [REDACTED] S UPDATE ON GOP
ACTIVITIES, THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE WAS NOT SO HAPPY THAT BRAHIMI
WAS COMING, SINCE HIS VISIT MAY INDICATE THERE IS SOME PROBLEM WITH
THE PROCESS IN TRYING TO BRING PEACE TO AFGHANISTAN. CONTINUING,
THE AMBASSADOR ALSO NOTED THAT HE HAD TOLD [REDACTED]
THAT HE WAS SURPRISED TO READ REPEATEDLY IN NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS OF
PAKISTANI DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITIES THAT THE U.S. IS TO BE A GUARANTOR
FOR AN INTRA-AFGHAN AGREEMENT, SINCE THE USG HAD NEVER BEEN
OFFICIALLY APPROACHED ABOUT PLAYING SUCH A ROLE. THE AMBASSADOR

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SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: STRAIGHT TALK WITH THE PAKISTAN [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
WELCOMED [REDACTED]'S COMMENTS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSULTATION
BETWEEN THE GOP AND THE UN AND U.S. ON ONGOING PAKISTANI SHUTTLE
DIPLOMACY, SINCE HE HAD BEEN CONCERNED LEST "PAKISTAN EXPECT THE UN
AND/OR THE U.S. SIMPLY TO ENDORSE WHATEVER MAY RESULT FROM IT."

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 LESS THERE THAN MEETS THE EYE

5. (C) REGISTERING THE AMBASSADOR'S POINT, [] SAID PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON RIAZ KHOKHAR WAS BRIEFING U/S PICKERING, AND THAT A/S INDERFURTH WOULD BE BRIEFED WHEN HE VISITS PAKISTAN.

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[] WOULD ALSO KEEP THE EMBASSY BRIEFED. REFERRING TO A POSSIBLE ROLE FOR THE U.S. AS "GUARANTOR," [] SAID THIS IDEA HAD NEVER BEEN FORMALIZED AND [] WAS SIMPLY TAKING "SOUNDINGS" TO SEE HOW THE VARIOUS FACTIONS WOULD RESPOND -- "THERE IS NO SPECIFIC PROPOSAL THAT THE U.S. WOULD BE A GUARANTOR." COMMENTING ON THE SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY, [] SAID PAKISTAN IS "CONTACTING EVERYONE" AND FINDING THAT "EVERYONE" FAVORS: DIALOGUE, FORMATION OF A BROAD-BASED GOVERNMENT, AND REALIZATION THAT THERE IS NO MILITARY SOLUTION IN AFGHANISTAN.

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6. (C) EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR []'S BRIEFINGS, THE AMBASSADOR SHARED WITH [] A CONVERSATION POLCOUNS HAD HAD (REFTEL) WITH [] DURING WHICH WE HAD ASKED HOW [] CONCEPTUALIZED THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HIS SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY AND THE UN EFFORTS. [] HAD RESPONDED THAT HE WOULD TAKE THE ISSUE SO FAR AND THEN HAND IT OVER TO THE UN, A RESPONSE THAT MADE THE AMBASSADOR UNCOMFORTABLE: NEITHER THE U.S. NOR THE UN WANTED TO HAVE A RESULT DUMPED IN ITS LAP, ESPECIALLY IF IT WERE A MESS, AND THEN ASKED TO CARRY IT OVER THE GOAL LINE. [] LAUGHINGLY WAVED AWAY THAT NOTION.

 HOLL AND PAKISTAN

7. (C) ASSESSING THE UN'S PERFORMANCE IN AFGHANISTAN, [] ASKED RHETORICALLY WHETHER HOLL HAS DONE ANYTHING TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH ALL SIDES. [] SAID IT IS PAKISTAN'S INITIATIVE TO SOUND OUT ALL SIDES; IN DOING SO, THE GOP NOW BELIEVES EVERYONE

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IS AMENABLE TO ESTABLISHING A POLITICAL COMMISSION -- "SO IF THE ISSUE IS BROUGHT TO THIS POINT, THEN WHY SHOULDN'T THE UN TAKE IT OVER?" HE ASKED RHETORICALLY. DECLARING THAT PAKISTAN WANTS TO HELP THE UN EFFORT, [REDACTED] REMARKED, "SOMETIMES THERE HAS BEEN NO INITIATIVE FROM THE UN, SOMETIMES THERE IS THE IMPRESSION THAT THE UN IS PARTISAN AND DISCRIMINATES AGAINST ONE PARTY." NOTING THAT THE AFGHANISTAN PROBLEM IS VERY DIFFICULT AND UNCERTAIN, [REDACTED] SAID PAKISTAN CANNOT BE CERTAIN WHETHER ITS INITIATIVE WILL BEAR FRUIT -- "IT WILL TAKE TIME; WE CANNOT EXPECT POSITIVE RESULTS IN ONLY A FEW WEEKS OR MONTHS."

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8. (C) RESPONDING, THE AMBASSADOR OBSERVED THAT HOLL HAD INHERITED FROM HIS PREDECESSOR A PERCEPTION AMONG AFGHANS THAT THE UN EFFORT WAS ANTI-TALIBAN, AND HAD DONE THINGS AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS TENURE THAT APPEARED TO VALIDATE THAT PERCEPTION. HE HAD WORKED HARD TO COUNTER IT, FOR INSTANCE BY BUILDING ON THE RESULTS OF THEN PAKISTANI INTERIOR MINISTER NASEERULLAH KHAN BABAR IN OCTOBER 1996, BUT IT REMAINED A PROBLEM. PAKISTAN, THE AMBASSADOR CONTINUED, SUFFERED FROM THE OPPOSITE PERCEPTION BY OTHERS: THAT IT SUPPORTED THE TALIBAN. SINCE THEY WERE SUFFERING FOR "OPPOSITE CRIMES," THE AMBASSADOR SUGGESTED, PAKISTAN AND THE UN SHOULD BALANCE THEM OUT BY WORKING TOGETHER TO ADVANCE PEACE IN AFGHANISTAN. THE AMBASSADOR CAUTIONED [REDACTED] NOT TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT PAKISTAN WOULD BE HAPPY WITH A CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP OF THE UN MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN -- "THAT WOULD REINFORCE SUSPICIONS THAT PAKISTAN IS AGAINST HOLL FOR BEING ANTI-TALIBAN." NOTING THAT THE GOP CANNOT CONTROL THE MEDIA, [REDACTED] SAID THE GOP NEVER REGARDED HOLL AS ANTI-TALIBAN, ONLY NOT SUFFICIENTLY ACTIVE. THE AMBASSADOR REJOINED THAT HOLL HAS BEEN QUITE ACTIVE, BUT SO LONG AS THE FACTIONS THEMSELVES DO NOT WANT NEGOTIATIONS BUT PREFER TO KEEP FIGHTING FOR BATTLEFIELD SOLUTIONS, HOLL COULD BE METTERNICH AND NOT GET MUCH FURTHER THAN HE HAS. BUT OF COURSE IT WOULD BE FOR THE UN TO DETERMINE HOW ITS MISSION ON AFGHANISTAN SHOULD PROCEED.

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AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMCONSUL LAHORE
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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ANOTHER SPECIAL U.S. PROBLEM

9. (C) BEYOND THE CONCERN HE HAD MENTIONED ABOUT HAVING A PAKISTANI
RESULT DUMPED IN THE U.S. LAP TO CARRY FORWARD, THE AMBASSADOR
NOTED THAT WE HAVE A SPECIAL TIMING PROBLEM WITH PAKISTAN'S CURRENT
EFFORT. HE MENTIONED IT IN RESPONSE TO [REDACTED]'S REFERENCE TO
"U.S. INDIFFERENCE." THE U.S. IS ASSOCIATED WITH PAKISTAN
WILLY-NILLY, BECAUSE OF OUR JOINT STRUGGLE WITH THE AFGHANS AGAINST
SOVIET DOMINATION AND BECAUSE OUR RELATIONS ARE GOOD. AND
PAKISTAN'S SNAP DECISION TO RECOGNIZE TALIBAN AS AFGHANISTAN'S
GOVERNMENT IN MAY HAD HAD THE EFFECT OF THROWING EIGHTEEN MONTHS OF
WORK DENYING THAT WE WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR TALIBAN OUT THE WINDOW.
WE WOULD THEREFORE BE VIEWING PAKISTANI EFFORTS TO RECOUP THIS
BLUNDER, INCLUDING EFFORTS TO ASSOCIATE US WITH IT, WITH SPECIAL
SENSITIVITY.

10. (C) REVIEWING PAKISTAN'S DECISION TO RECOGNIZE THE TALIBAN
GOVERNMENT, [REDACTED] ASSERTED THAT RECOGNITION HAD NOT BEEN A SNAP
DECISION, BUT RATHER A DELAYED DECISION, IN LIGHT OF PAKISTAN'S
POLICY TO RECOGNIZE WHOMEVER SITS IN KABUL. THE AMBASSADOR

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 COMMENTED THAT HE WOULD FIND THIS EXPLANATION MORE CREDIBLE IF
 RECOGNITION HAD FOLLOWED ON THE HEELS OF THE TALIBAN'S CAPTURE OF
 KABUL, RATHER THAN AFTER THE FALL OF MAZAR-I-SHARIF. [REDACTED] SAID
 HE HAD ALWAYS SUPPORTED RECOGNITION AFTER KABUL, PRECISELY ON THE
 GROUNDS THAT PAKISTAN HAD ALWAYS WORKED WITH WHICHEVER GOVERNMENT
 RULED THERE, BUT HAD NOT BEEN IN CHARGE.

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 MISCELLANEOUS: WHEAT, FUEL, MASOOD

11. (C) THE AMBASSADOR NOTED HIS INTEREST IN GOP EFFORTS TO
 REGULATE THE FLOW OF WHEAT AND OIL INTO AFGHANISTAN, OBSERVING THAT
 CONTROLLING TRADE OF THESE VITAL COMMODITIES MAY GIVE PAKISTAN
 GREATER LEVERAGE OVER THE TALIBAN. [REDACTED] REPLIED THAT THIS WAS
 PRECISELY THEIR INTENT. AS THE MEETING BEGAN TO BREAK UP, [REDACTED]
 ASKED WHETHER THE U.S. HAS HAD CONTACT WITH JAMIAT-I-ISLAMI
 COMMANDER MASOOD, SEEMINGLY SUGGESTING THAT WE SHOULD AVOID SUCH
 CONTACT. THE AMBASSADOR SAID WE HAVE BEEN ASKED THE SAME QUESTION
 ELSEWHERE IN THE PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT, AND HE ASSUMED HE WAS NOT
 HEARING FROM SHAMSHAD A REQUEST THAT PAKISTAN DETERMINE WHOM WE SEE
 AMONG AFGHANS. WE HAD NOT RECENTLY MET HIM, BUT OUR POLICY IS TO
 KEEP CONTACT OPEN WITH ALL FACTIONS, AND WE MAY WELL MEET HIM IN
 THE FUTURE.

 COMMENT

12. (C) THIS WAS A GOOD EXCHANGE WITH [REDACTED], MORE CANDID THAN
 USUAL ON BOTH SIDES. WE HOPE THE MESSAGE GOT THROUGH TO HIM THAT
 WE AND THE UN BOTH NEED TO BE KEPT FULLY IN THE LOOP AS PAKISTAN'S
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SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY IN AFGHANISTAN CONTINUES. THESE EFFORTS CAN BE
HELPFUL IF PROPERLY COORDINATED. THE MESSAGE SHOULD BE CLEAR THAT
WE (AND THE UN) WILL NOT LOOK KINDLY ON BEING HANDED A FAIT
ACCOMPLI AT SOME FUTURE POINT. [REDACTED] ALSO SEEMINGLY GOT THE
POINT ABOUT NOT GOING OVERBOARD IN PAKISTAN'S WELCOME OF BRAHIMI,
THOUGH IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER HE CAN CONTAIN GOP ZEAL TO BE
RID OF HOLL. AND OF COURSE THE LARGER QUESTION OF WHETHER THE GOP
CAN ORGANIZE ITSELF FOR COHERENT ACTION ON AFGHANISTAN IN GENERAL
ALSO REMAINS OPEN. AUGUST 12 BEGAN WITH AN URGENT CALL FROM
[REDACTED] OFFERING THE AMBASSADOR A
BRIEFING; THE DCM WILL FOLLOW UP. SIMONS

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