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MEMORANDUM FOR Secretary OF Defense

SUBJECT: Trends in Afghanistan

REF: SECDEF Memorandum, 3 Sept 02, Subject: Trends in Afghanistan.

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- Efforts by Al Qaida (AQ)/ Taliban (TB) remnants to position themselves for insurgency operations against U.S. and Coalition Forces.

- Generally deteriorating security situation.

2. AQ and anti-Afghan Transitional Authority (ATA) leaders are attempting to position themselves for insurgency operations; however, currently these efforts represent a limited threat to the ATA and/or Coalition:

- Efforts to develop an insurgency are manageable. The "fractious nature" of the various opposition groups will limit their ability to develop an insurgency; however, the Mujahideen coalesced against the Soviets in the 1980s under similar circumstances. Ultimately, the lack of sufficient external support will limit the success of any insurgency.
- Islamist leaders will attempt to use xenophobia and religion to generate support for their insurgency. However, there appears to be little support for a nationwide grass roots resistance movement.
- The coalition will maintain credibility if it generally remains neutral in inter-ethnic conflicts and is seen to be supporting the Government of Afghanistan (GOA), assuming the GOA remains broadly accepted by Afghans.
- Actions by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO'S) and Information Operations (IO's) are creating good will and positive perceptions by Afghans, however their impact in key areas is limited by legitimate and perceived security concerns. Some humanitarian assistance efforts are delayed

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based on misperceptions of the security situation and/or a reluctance to move into new areas.

3. Iran is building influence; however, this type of activity is not limited to Iran, nor should it necessarily be viewed as a destabilizing factor.

- Increased Iranian influence in the west will enhance narcotics interdiction efforts in Afghanistan.
- Russia, Pakistan and India are also conducting influence campaigns in their areas of influence.
- The US is perceived to have national rather than regional interests in Afghanistan, which will enhance perceptions of our position as an impartial party.

4. In terms of inter-factional violence and fighting between warlords, Afghanistan is more secure today than it has been since the late 1970s. However, episodes of criminal activity, absence of rule of law, and political instability are typical in a post civil war environment, and Afghanistan is no different.

- Despite sporadic ethnic clashes, there has been relative peace between ethnic groups and among factional leaders.
- The maintenance of relative calm after the bombings and assassination indicates that the situation is manageable.
- Continued stability hinges on the government's ability to maintain security and provide economic development.
- The successful fielding of a capable Afghan National Army (ANA) will enhance the GOA's ability to maintain security.
- The delivery of promised international aid will boost infrastructure development and economic recovery.

5. Efforts by Pakistan over the past several months, especially the recent raids in Karachi, have significantly impacted AQ ability to transfer funds, material support, and technical expertise to extremist elements.

- There are still individual anti-ATA elements who can and will commit violent acts.
- Disruption of AQ activity in Karachi will impact AQ and anti-ATA activities in Waziristan, and the ability to support operations into Afghanistan.

6. The security situation in Afghanistan, as defined by ethnic clashes, crime, narcotics trafficking and anti-ATA and coalition activities remains a concern. However, the CIA assessment overstates the immediate risks to stability and security, and understates the positive developments underway to bring stability to Afghanistan. Our ongoing efforts, supported by the practical delivery of development aid by the international

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community will both be required to sustain the initiative against anti-ATA forces.

bm *Franks*
Tommy R. Franks
General, USA

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