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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 00154 02 OF 03 080314Z
ACTION SCT-00

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-10	ACDE-00	INLB-01	AID-00	A-00	ACQ-01
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	INL-01	OASY-00	DOEE-00	DOFE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EAP-01
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	TEDE-00	INR-00	INSE-00	IO-00	L-01	MCO-01	ADS-00
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	OIC-02	OIS-01	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00
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PAGE 02 ISLAMA 00154 02 OF 03 080314Z
AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
AMEMBASSY ROME

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AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BISHKEK
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 ISLAMABAD 000154

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (HEADER)

DEPT FOR SA/PAB AND EUR/CEN; USVIENNA FOR US DEL OSCE; LONDON FOR POL/TUELLER; PARIS FOR POL/RAVELING; ROME FOR POL/DEMPSEY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 1/7/07

TAGS: PGOV, MOPS, KISL, PTER, KWMN, AF

SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: JALALUDDIN HAQQANI'S EMERGENCE AS A KEY TALIBAN COMMANDER

"SOCIAL MODERATE, WHO IS NOT STRONGLY SUPPORTIVE OF THE TALIBAN'S POSITIONS ON THE TREATMENT OF WOMEN." HE EXPLAINED THAT HAQQANI'S TRIBE, THE ZADRANS, ARE CONSIDERED MORE LIBERAL IN THEIR TREATMENT OF WOMEN THAN THE TRIBES IN THE KANDAHAR AREA. (NOTE: MOST INFLUENTIAL TALIBAN LEADERS ARE FROM KANDAHAR PROVINCE.) WAHAB COMMENTED, HOWEVER, THAT HAQQANI FUNCTIONS MORE IN THE MILITARY AREA, AND IS NOT A FORCE IN SETTING TALIBAN POLITICAL OR SOCIAL ISSUES.

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PAGE 03 ISLAMA 00154 02 OF 03 080314Z
HAQQANI SEEN AS INFLUENCED BY ISLAMIC EXTREMISTS

7. (C) IN A JANUARY 6 CONVERSATION WITH POLOFF, [REDACTED] TALIBAN SUPPORTER [REDACTED] SAID HE KNOWS HAQQANI AND AGREES THAT HE IS AN EFFECTIVE MILITARY STRATEGIST. HE ARGUED THAT HAQQANI "SHOULD BE SEEN IN HIS PROPER CONTEXT AND HE HAS CLEAR LINKS WITH ISLAMIC EXTREMISTS." WARMING TO THIS THEME [REDACTED] ASSERTED THAT HAQQANI HAD DEVELOPED A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH VARIOUS RADICAL ARAB GROUPS DURING THE JIHAD.

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THESE RELATIONSHIPS, [REDACTED] ASSERTED, HAVE CONTINUED AND, IN EXCHANGE FOR WEAPONS AND MONEY, HAQQANI IS "OFFERING SHELTER FOR VARIOUS ARABS IN AREAS OF PAKTIA PROVINCE." BRUSHING ASIDE POLOFF'S REQUEST FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT, [REDACTED] STATED THAT HE DID NOT HAVE THE DETAILS, BUT THAT HAQQANI'S ROLE WITH THE "ARABS" IS "WELL-KNOWN." (NOTE: REPORTING IN OTHER CHANNELS INDICATE THAT HAQQANI MAINTAINS THESE LINKS.)

NOT SEEN AS INFLUENTIAL WITH TALIBAN

8. (C) TURNING TO THE ISSUE OF HAQQANI'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE TALIBAN, [REDACTED] CONCURRED WITH WAHAB'S ASSESSMENT THAT HAQQANI PROBABLY DID NOT HAVE SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE WITH THE TALIBAN ON POLITICAL OR SOCIAL ISSUES. "ALTHOUGH HE IS A MULLAH," HE RELATED, "HAQQANI IS NOT CONSIDERED TO BE A TALIBAN AND HE HAS LITTLE CREDIBILITY WITH THEM ON ISSUES OUTSIDE OF THE MILITARY REALM." HE OBSERVED THAT HAQQANI'S TIES TO ISLAMIC EXTREMISTS ARE ALSO OPPOSED BY A NUMBER OF TALIBAN OFFICIALS, INCLUDING "ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER" GH AUS. (NOTE: IN A MEETING WITH DCM IN EARLY DECEMBER,
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PAGE 04 ISLAMA 00154 02 OF 03 080314Z
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ONE OF THE "HARD MEN"

9. (C) GENERAL PAYENDA, DOSTAM'S REPRESENTATIVE IN ISLAMABAD, TOLD POLOFF JANUARY 3 THAT MEMBERS OF THE SUPREME DEFENSE COUNCIL ARE AWARE OF HAQQANI'S EMERGENCE AS AN IMPORTANT TALIBAN COMMANDER AND THEY SEE HIS RISE AS A MANIFESTATION OF A TALIBAN POLICY TO PLACE "HARD MEN" IN KEY MILITARY POSITIONS. (NOTE: PAYENDA CHARACTERIZED THE TALIBAN'S RECENT SELECTION OF ABDUL RAZAQ AS GOVERNOR OF HERAT AS PART OF THIS TALIBAN POLICY-- REF B.) HAQQANI'S ZADRAN TRIBESMEN ARE "QUITE WILD," HE CONTINUED, "AND THE

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TALIBAN WANT THEM ON THE FRONT-LINES TO HARASS OUR FORCES." PAYENDA EVINced LITTLE CONCERN ABOUT HAQQANI, HOWEVER, ASSERTING THAT HE AND HIS FORCES GENERALLY LACK DISCIPLINE AND WILL INEVITABLY DEVELOP TENSIONS WITH THE TALIBAN.

COMMENT

10. (C) THE PRESENCE OF HAQQANI'S FORCES NORTH OF KABUL--WHETHER

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PAGE 05 ISLAMA 00154 02 OF 03 080314Z

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 00154 01 OF 03 071321Z
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PAGE 02 ISLAMA 00154 01 OF 03 071321Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ISLAMABAD 000154

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TALIBAN COMMANDER

REFS: (A) ISLAMABAD 25

- (B) 96 ISLAMABAD 10882

1. (U) CLASSIFIED BY POLITICAL COUNSELOR THOMAS PRICE. REASON:
1.5 (C) (D).

SUMMARY

2. (C) RECENT REPORTS INDICATE THAT FORMER AFGHAN RESISTANCE
COMMANDER JALALUDDIN HAQQANI MAY NOW BE IN CHARGE OF THE TALIBAN'S
FORCES NORTH OF KABUL. VIEWS OF HAQQANI'S ROLE WITH THE TALIBAN

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PAGE 03 ISLAMA 00154 01 OF 03 071321Z
ARE MIXED. SOME OBSERVERS SEE HIM AS AN EFFECTIVE MILITARY LEADER
WITH SOCIALLY MODERATE VIEWS. OTHERS EXPRESS CONCERN ABOUT
HAQQANI'S LINKS TO ISLAMIC EXTREMISTS. OBSERVERS TEND TO AGREE
THAT HAQQANI AT THIS TIME PROBABLY HAS MORE INFLUENCE WITH THE
TALIBAN ON MILITARY STRATEGY THAN ON POLITICAL OR SOCIAL ISSUES.
END SUMMARY.

NEW ROLE AS KEY COMMANDER NORTH OF KABUL

3. (C) RECENT PRESS AND RADIO REPORTS INDICATE THAT FORMER AFGHAN
RESISTANCE COMMANDER JALALUDDIN HAQQANI MAY NOW BE IN CHARGE OF THE
TALIBAN'S FORCES NORTH OF KABUL. THERE HAS BEEN NO CONFIRMATION
FROM THE TALIBAN THAT HAQQANI HAS BEEN PLACED IN SUCH A POSITION
AND HIS FORMAL TALIBAN TITLE REMAINS "ACTING MINISTER OF TRIBES AND
BORDERS." IF HAQQANI HAS ASSUMED THE LEAD ROLE NORTH OF KABUL--THE
WAR'S MOST IMPORTANT SECTOR--HE WILL HAVE TAKEN OVER A POSITION
PREVIOUSLY HELD BY MULLAH BORJAN, FORMERLY THE TALIBAN'S CHIEF
MILITARY COMMANDER, WHO WAS KILLED NEAR KABUL IN LATE SEPTEMBER
1996.

4. (C) HAQQANI, 50, HAS BEEN A COMMANDER FOR THE TALIBAN SINCE THE
GROUP'S BEGINNING IN 1994. BEFORE 1994, HE WAS A MAJOR COMMANDER
FOR HEZB-I-ISLAMI (KHALIS) IN PAKTIA PROVINCE DURING THE SOVIET-
AFGHAN WAR. REPORTEDLY, HE COMMANDS THE RESPECT OF HIS FELLOW
ZADRAN TRIBESMEN FROM THE PAKTIA-PAKTIKA AREA AND HAS BROUGHT A
LARGE NUMBER OF THEM WITH HIM TO THE KABUL FRONT. A MULLAH,
HAQQANI STUDIED FOR SIXTEEN YEARS IN AFGHAN AND PAKISTANI
MADRASSAHS.

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PAGE 04 ISLAMA 00154 01 OF 03 071321Z

A TOUGH MILITARY LEADER

5. (C) ABDUL WAHAB, FIRST SECRETARY AT THE AFGHAN EMBASSY IN

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ISLAMABAD AND A TALIBAN SUPPORTER, TOLD POLOFF JANUARY 1 THAT HE COULD NOT CONFIRM THAT HAQQANI HAS ASSUMED THE ROLE OF CHIEF COMMANDER ON THE KABUL FRONT. HE THOUGHT, HOWEVER, THAT HAQQANI HAD BECOME ONE OF THE "TALIBAN'S KEY MILITARY COMMANDERS BECAUSE HE IS KNOWN FOR HIS TOUGHNESS AND MILITARY EFFECTIVENESS." WAHAB, A FORMER HEZB-I-ISLAMI (KHALIS) COMMANDER LIKE HAQQANI, CLAIMED THAT HAQQANI PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN THE TALIBAN'S DEFEAT OF HEZB-I-ISLAMI (HEKMATYAR) FORCES IN EASTERN AFGHANISTAN IN AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1996. HE EXPLAINED THAT GHILZAIS (A MAJOR BRANCH OF THE PASHTUN ETHNIC GROUP) IN EASTERN AFGHANISTAN HAD "DEFECTED FROM HEKMATYAR TO THE TALIBAN LARGELY BECAUSE OF HAQQANI'S SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO TURN THEM AGAINST THE KABUL REGIME." (NOTE: GULBUDDIN HEKMATYAR SERVED AS THE FORMER KABUL REGIME'S PRIME MINISTER FOR SEVERAL MONTHS BEFORE THE TALIBAN SEIZED KABUL IN SEPTEMBER 1996.)

PORTRAYED AS A "SOCIAL MODERATE"

6. (C) ASKED ABOUT HAQQANI'S VIEWS ON THE TALIBAN'S SOCIAL POLICIES, WAHAB REPLIED THAT HE THOUGHT THAT OF HAQQANI AS A

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 00154 02 OF 03 071323Z
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PAGE 02 ISLAMA 00154 02 OF 03 071323Z

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TALIBAN COMMANDER

HAQQANI IS OVERALL COMMANDER OF THE SECTOR OR NOT--IS SIGNIFICANT
AND HAS UNDOUBTEDLY ADDED TO THE MILITARY CLOUT OF THE TALIBAN. AT
THE SAME TIME, THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST THAT HE IS
INFLUENTIAL IN TALIBAN CIRCLES. BECAUSE OF HAQQANI'S LINKS TO
EXTREMISTS, HOWEVER, HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE TALIBAN BEARS CLOSE
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