

(U) Afghanistan: Al-Qaida Military Contribution to the Taleban

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B1,1.4(D),1.4(C)



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(U) Afghanistan: Al-Qaida Military Contribution to the Taleban

(S) With the decline in military aid by Pakistan over the last year, the Taleban have increasingly relied on Usama bin Laden and the al-Qaida organization for support. Bin Laden provides money, recruits, materiel, and training for the fight against the Northern Alliance.

(U) Funding

(S) Bin Laden probably contributes several million dollars a year (from both personal and network funds) to the Taleban. A small percentage of this money is earmarked for civic infrastructure; the rest probably is intended for military use. Bin Laden's largess is such that the press reported in late August that Taleban leader Mullah Omar had appointed him as Afghanistan's "Defense Minister," but apparently there was no formal announcement.

(U) Recruits

(S) Bin Laden's global network for funneling recruits into Afghanistan for training has existed since the 1980s. Some of the volunteers are sent to fight in Afghanistan. It is unlikely that the Taleban could sustain themselves without the fresh supply of foreign volunteers that bin Laden provides, unless they were to increase their highly unpopular forced recruitment of fighters from the local population.

(U) Fighters

(S) The so-called 55th, or 055, Brigade is made up predominately of expatriate mujahidin forces loyal to bin Laden. Members of the brigade generally are employed in small groups where they are most useful on the battlefield rather than as a single large unit. The strength of the 55th probably ranges between 500 and 2,500. Al-Qaida probably rotates personnel through this brigade to gain combat experience prior to their dispatch abroad.

(S) The unit has a reputation for tenacity in battle and seems less susceptible to the defection and bribery that plague Taleban ranks.

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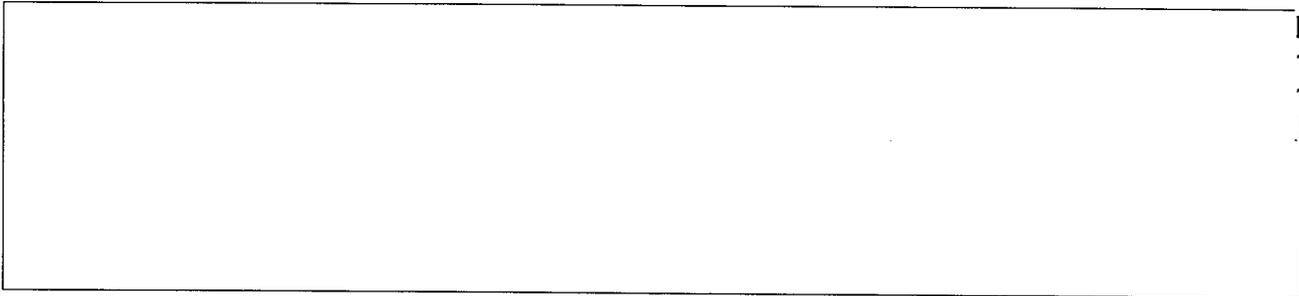
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11-1 ~ Declassify on: 10/01/2021

(U) Equipment

(S) Bin Laden's supply network parallels his recruiting structure. Sympathizers obtain supplies abroad and smuggle them to Afghanistan. Al-Qaida's reach and scope is impressive, extending across several continents.

(U) Camps



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Reason for Classification: 1.5 (c)(d)

Declassify on: 1.6X1

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