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**FROM**

(b)(3):10 USC 424

**CONTROLS**

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 01 OF 05 (b)(3):10 USC 424

SUBJECT: (b)(3):10 USC 424 WARLORDS CLASH IN HERAT -  
SUMMARY OF EVENTS 14-22 AUGUST

SERIAL: (U) (b)(3):10 USC 424

/\*\*\*\*\* THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE \*\*\*\*\*/

**BODY**

COUNTRY: (U) AFGHANISTAN (AF)

(b)(3):10 USC 424

WARNING: (U) THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY  
EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE. REPORT CLASSIFIED

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
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SUMMARY: (U) LOCAL WARLORDS THREATEN ((ISMAEL)) KHAN -  
ADVANCE ON HERAT FROM NORTH, SOUTH AND EAST. ((AMANULLAH))  
KHAN SEIZES STRATEGIC SHINDAND AIRPORT BUT STOPS SHORT OF  
HERAT CITY ONLY IN FACE OF COALITION AIRPOWER. TENSE  
CEASE-FIRE CURRENTLY IN EFFECT. KABUL WEIGHS ITS OPTIONS.

TEXT: 1. (U) THIS REPORT PROVIDES A SUMMARY OF RECENT  
ACTIVITY IN THE WESTERN REGION OF AFGHANISTAN AS REPORTED BY  
MEMBERS OF THE COALITION PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM IN  
HERAT. AT DOI THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT BROKERED CEASE FIRE IS  
HOLDING ALTHOUGH BOTH PRINCIPAL COMBATANTS GOVERNOR  
((ISMAEL)) KHAN AND INDEPENDENT MILITIA LEADER ((AMANULLAH))  
KHAN CONTINUE TO POSTURE AND CLAIM VIOLATIONS OF THE  
AGREEMENT.

2. (U) OVERVIEW - SHINDAND COMMANDER AMANULLAH KHAN BROKE  
THROUGH FRONT LINES AND CAME WITHIN 20 KILOMETERS OF HERAT'S  
AIRPORT ON AUGUST 17, BUT WAS PUSHED BACK BY THREATS OF ANA

AND U.S. INTERVENTION. THAT SAME DAY WITNESSED MANEUVERS AND CLASHES ALONG FRONTS IN BADGHIS, ALONG THE GHOR-HERAT BORDER, AND IN WESTERN HERAT PROVINCE. MANY SPECULATE THE ATTACKS WERE COORDINATED AND MAY HAVE HAD TACIT BLESSING OF SOME IN KARZAI'S CABINET. WHILE A CEASE-FIRE BROKERED BY KABUL AND U.S. OFFICIALS TOOK EFFECT LATE ON THE 17TH AND HAS GENERALLY HELD, HERAT'S GOVERNOR ISMAEL KHAN CONTINUES TO CALL FOR THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO FORCE AMANULLAH TO RELINQUISH ALL TERRITORY HE HAS SEIZED SINCE TAKING SHINDAND AIRBASE ON 14 AUGUST. ON 20 AUGUST KABUL DISPATCHED A COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE THE FIGHTING AND RECOMMEND NEXT STEPS. HERAT'S GOVERNOR IS ALSO CALLING ON THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO CLARIFY AMANULLAH'S TIES TO THE TALIBAN, HE AND HIS ASSOCIATES HAVE MADE SPECIFIC CLAIMS OF TALIBAN FIGURES JOINING THE FIGHT FROM HELMAND, KANDAHAR, AND URUZGAN. WHILE MOST CLAIMS ARE DIFFICULT TO SUBSTANTIATE, THE PRT HAS SEEN EVIDENCE OF TORTURE BY TROOPS LOYAL TO AMANULLAH. WE CONTINUE TO RECEIVE REPORTS OF PLANNING FOR POSSIBLE FOLLOW-ON ATTACKS, TENSION IN THE CITY REMAINS HIGH, AND THERE ARE STRONG POPULAR DEMANDS FOR MORE DECISIVE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ACTIONS.

3. (U) AMANULLAH KHAN DRIVE ON HERAT - AFTER TAKING SHINDAND AIRBASE IN A SURPRISE ATTACK AUGUST 14, AND ENGAGING HERAT GOVERNOR'S FORCES IN TWO DAYS OF SKIRMISHES, ON AUGUST 17 AMANULLAH KHAN BROKE THROUGH THE FRONT LINES NORTH OF THAT CITY. APPROXIMATELY 20 KILOMETERS FROM HERAT'S AIRPORT AMANULLAH WAS STOPPED BY THE THREAT OF ANA/U.S. INTERVENTION CONVEYED BY SENIOR AFGHAN AND INTERNATIONAL OFFICIALS IN KABUL. U.S. WARPLANES WERE CALLED IN TO DEMONSTRATE THE

/\*\*\*\*\* BEGINNING OF SECTION 2 \*\*\*\*\*/

SUMMARY OF EVENTS 14-22 AUGUST

SERIOUSNESS OF KABUL'S INTENT. AS AMANULLAH WITHDREW HIS TROOPS INITIALLY TO ADRASKAN ON THE 17TH, AN AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY (ANA) FORCE WAS INSERTED BETWEEN THE TWO WARRING FACTIONS AND A CEASE-FIRE WAS CALLED.

4. (U) HERAT PROVINCIAL MFA REPORTED THAT BY THE 18TH, 23 BODIES FROM ISMAEL KHAN'S SIDE HAD BEEN RETURNED TO HERAT, 7 HAD BEEN BURIED IN SHINDAND. 43 BODIES HAD BEEN RECOVERED, 21 WERE INJURED, AND OVER 100 MISSING. REPORTEDLY BOTH THE AIRBASE COMMANDER HABIBULLAH ((AZIMI)) AND THE COMMANDER OF THE SHINDAND BORDER BRIGADE ABDUL ((KARIM)) HAD BEEN KILLED. THE MFA CLAIMED THAT THESE TWO MEN AND ONE OTHER SENIOR LEADER HAD BEEN BEHEADED. HERAT MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION

