

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
Sent: Sunday, March 11, 2012 12:37 PM
To: H
Subject: FW: U.S. Soldier Reportedly Kills 13 Afghan Civilians in Kandahar
Attachments: StateSeal.gif

From: Cunningham, James B
Sent: Sunday, March 11, 2012 11:46 AM
To: Sullivan, Jacob J
Subject: FW: U.S. Soldier Reportedly Kills 13 Afghan Civilians in Kandahar

Fyi. Terrible day.

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: Odlum, Geoffrey M
Sent: Sunday, March 11, 2012 7:51 PM
To: Cunningham, James B; Pearce, David D; Crocker, Ryan C; Kennedy, Patrick F; 'Allen, John R Gen USMC COMISAF'; Grossman, Marc I; Jones, Beth E (S/SRAP); 'Eggers, Jeff'
Cc: Rank, David H; Tomlinson, Christina; DeHart, James P; Klumpp, Richard A; O'Connor, Eileen
Subject: FW: U.S. Soldier Reportedly Kills 13 Afghan Civilians in Kandahar

Dear Ambassadors and General Allen,

Embassy Kabul's initial cable readout of the U.S. military shooting incident in Kandahar follows below.

Geoff Odlum

Embassy Kabul POL section

From: SMART Core [<mailto:svcSMARTBTSRctSPrec@state.gov>]
Sent: Sunday, March 11, 2012 7:34 PM
To: Miller, Andrea R
Cc: Kabul, SMARTS; ANKARA-SMARTS; WARSAW-SMARTS; BRUSSELS-SMARTS; PARIS-SMARTS; TheHague-SMARTS; BERN-SMARTS; Skopje-SMARTS; PESHAWAR, SMARTS; ZAGREB-SMARTS; OSCE, SMARTS; Wellington-SMARTS; DUBLIN, SMARTS; TASHKENT, SMARTS; LISBON-SMARTS; UNVIE, SMARTS; LJUBLJANA-SMARTS; MADRID-SMARTS; BUDAPEST-SMARTS; TiranaSMARTS; LONDON-SMARTS; BRATISLAVA-SMARTS; Mailbox | KYIV-SMARTS; OTTAWA-SMARTS; BEIJING-SMARTS; Canberra, SMARTS; HELSINKI, SMARTS; ASTANA-SMARTS; ISLAMABAD, SMARTS; LUXEMBOURG, SMARTS; BERLIN-SMARTS; TOKYO-SMARTS; ROME-SMARTS; USEU-SMARTS; USUN, SMARTS; BUCHAREST-SMARTS; VIENNA, SMARTS; TBILISI-SMARTS; MUNICH-SMARTS; NEWDELHI-SMARTS; Copenhagen-SMARTS; NICOSIA, SMARTS;

MILAN-SMARTS; Sofia-SMARTS; Vilnius-SMARTS; Stockholm, SMARTS; USNATO, SMARTS; Dushanbe, SMARTS
Subject: U.S. Soldier Reportedly Kills 13 Afghan Civilians in Kandahar

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 SBU



MRN: 12 KABUL 1212
Date/DTG: Mar 11, 2012 / 111502Z MAR 12
From: AMEMBASSY KABUL
Action: WASHDC, SECSTATE *ROUTINE*
E.O.: 13526
TAGS: PINS, PGOV, PREL, MOPS, AF
Captions: SENSITIVE
Subject: U.S. Soldier Reportedly Kills 13 Afghan Civilians in Kandahar

1. (SBU) In the pre-dawn hours of Sunday morning, March 11, a U.S. soldier allegedly departed his Forward Operating Base (FOB) in a village in Panjwai District, Kandahar Province. Precise details about the engagement remain unclear, but according to local accounts as reported in the press, the soldier shot a number of Afghan civilians, resulting in multiple deaths and injuries, including several children. ISAF can confirm 13 victims killed and five wounded, though the numbers may change. (Ministry of Defense reported 15 killed.) Reports from Afghans on the scene, including Security Coordinator Asidullah Khalid and Kandahar Police Chief Raziq, range to up to 20 fatalities. Five wounded civilians, including three children, have been transported to Kandahar Airfield (KAF) Role 3 hospital for treatment. One, a 10 year old girl, is critical. The soldier is in U.S. military custody and has been moved to KAF where he is being detained.
2. (SBU) Upon learning of the incident, Charge d'Affaires Ambassador Cunningham and D/COMISAF LTG Bradshaw (UK) called on Defense Minister Wardak. (Note: As with the Quran burning, ISAF, IJC and RC-S have been working security and political leaders in Kandahar and Kabul). Cunningham and Bradshaw expressed ISAF and USG deep regret and condolences for the loss of life and pledged a full investigation in cooperation with Afghan authorities. They urged Wardak, who had already received reports of 15 deaths, to work to control the reaction. Wardak suggested a call "at the political level" to President Karzai might help. Cunningham told Wardak that the attack seemed the work of one disturbed individual, who had been detained. Wardak said the attack involved families from two villages, and there were rumors that several American soldiers must have been involved. Cunningham asked Wardak not to jump to conclusions. Wardak said his information is that ANA found an American passed out in one of the compounds and turned him over to coalition forces.
3. (SBU) The Presidential Palace issued a statement the evening of March 11. Text follows:

"President Hamid Karzai Condemns the Intentional Killing of Civilians by an American Soldier in Panjwai District of Kandahar Province

Kabul: The President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai condemned with strong terms the killing of Afghan civilians in Panjwai District of Kandahar Province and described this action of the American Soldier as an intentional conduct and mass murder.

Last night an American soldier broke into the houses of civilians in Panjwai District, Vang Aabad and Baland-i-pul area, killing 16 civilians, including 9 children, three women and the rest were all men, and wounding five other civilians. President Karzai said, "The Government of Afghanistan has repeatedly condemned those counter terrorism operations in which civilians are killed. And the American soldier that killed civilians is an intentional murderer and assassin. This is an unforgiveable action."

President Karzai added that the Afghan government and the people of Afghanistan asks the United States government for an explanation about this incident. Likewise, President Karzai, when he found out about this incident, assigned a delegation comprised of the Minister of Border and Tribal Affairs and President Karzai's representative to RC-South, Assadullah Khalid, Kandahar Chief of Police, the Commander of ANA Corps for RC-South and members of the Kandahar Provincial Council and Tribal Elders to investigate the incident.

President Karzai also had a telephone conversation with the delegation and a number of tribal elders in Kandahar province. During this telephone conversation with President Karzai, a tribal elder named Haji Samag Aka, who lost a member of his family during this incident, told President Karzai, "Despite your repeated demand from the United States to prevent civilian casualties, American soldiers still kill innocent civilians. American soldiers oppress us and make us suffer as if we are on fire."

Residents of Kandahar emphasized to President Karzai that they wanted the government of Afghanistan to know that "this barbaric action should not be left without answers and the perpetrators should receive hard punishment."

President Karzai assured the people of Kandahar that the Afghan government will seriously raise this issue with the Americans and will not be left without answers.

In addition, President Karzai also talked with those who are wounded in this incident and sent his condolence to them. Among the people who were wounded, a young boy named Rafiullah, who is 16 years old, told President Karzai that American soldiers entered his room while it was dark, waking up members of his family and then opened fire at him and his family members.

Considering the special importance of this incident in which innocent civilians, especially women and children, were intentionally murdered, President Karzai assigned a second delegation from Kabul, headed by the Afghan Army Chief of Staff, with the Deputy Minister of Interior and the Deputy of the National Directorate of Security as members, and tasked the delegation with visiting the area where the incident took place to conduct further investigation and report back to the President's office as soon as possible." End text.

4. (SBU) The Ministry of Defense also issued a statement the evening of March 11. Text follows: "The Minister of Defense and the personnel of MOD are very saddened and stunned hearing the news that 15 of their countrymen were martyred and nine were wounded, including men, women, elders, and children by coalition forces (Note: we are checking to see if that is what the statement actually said) in Zangabad village, (Panjwai) Punwai district of Kandahar province. The Ministry strongly condemns this inhuman and devastating incident and asks the authorities of ISAF to capture the perpetrators of this merciless action as soon as possible and punish them for their despicable crime. The Ministry of Defense conveys its condolences and sympathies to the families of the victims, and asks the Almighty Allah to reward the victims the best heaven and the soonest recover for the wounded."
5. (SBU) ISAF and the U.S. Embassy have issued statements of condolence, attached, which were quickly picked up by international and Afghan media. The Embassy is also providing to Afghan television and radio stations digital recordings of Ambassador Cunningham and two other Embassy officers delivering those statements in English, Pashto, and Dari. At 1500 the Embassy held an Emergency Action Committee to review our security posture; outcomes of that EAC meeting are being reported by septel.
6. (SBU) According to RC-South, as reported to post as of mid-afternoon March 11, DST Panjwai reports no change in the situation there. Approximately 100 protestors remained gathered outside of the district center, but there had been no reports of violence. The FOB where the DST is located, which is

contiguous to the district center, was on lockdown. The incident began to be reported in Kandahar media on Twitter at about 1100 local time. There were reports that Kandahar Governor Wesa had released a statement on the incident, but KPRT verified that Wesa has not yet done so. Asidullah Khalid reportedly has been in contact with Karzai, and in a brief local statement reportedly attempted to calm emotions, saying he had been to the scene and one rogue soldier seemed to be involved. Local media outlets were issuing conflicting messages regarding the number and severity of casualties. According to PRT Kandahar, there were no reports of public reaction to the incident other than the gathering noted above in Panjwai district. PRT Uruzgan cancelled outside the wire movements until they could gauge local reaction to the incident. PRT Zabul reported no reaction in Zabul Province so far. PRT Zabul discussed the incident briefly with the Provincial Chief of Police and other GIRoA officials who attended the PRT's Transfer of Authority ceremony this morning, but it appeared to be the first that they had heard of it.

7. (SBU) News of the incident quickly became the lead story for all international and Afghan media. So far, Afghan media coverage has been straightforward, with outlets expanding their stories throughout the afternoon as more facts became known. This evening's Afghan newscasts, which will air later, will provide the first opportunity to gauge reaction, followed by the current events talk shows.
8. (SBU) Comment: Following within a few weeks of the February 20 Quran burning incident and violent aftermath, this event may trigger renewed Afghan public anger. End comment.

Signature: Cunningham

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Approved By: Front Office:Cunningham, James B
Released By: KABUL:Miller, Andrea R
Info: AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE ROUTINE

Action Post:

Dissemination Rule: Released Copy

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