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ACTION SCT-03

RELEASED IN PART B1,1.4(D),B6

INFO LOG-00 ACDA-17 AID-01 A-01 CA-02 CCO-00 CG-00
CIAE-00 COME-00 CTME-00 C-01 OASY-00 DODE-00 DOEE-00
DOTE-00 DS-00 EB-01 EUR-01 OIGO-01 FAAE-00 FBIE-00
FBO-01 HA-09 H-01 IMMC-01 TEDE-00 INR-00 INSE-00
IO-16 L-01 ADS-00 M-00 NEA-01 NRCE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 OCS-06 OIC-02 OIS-01 OMB-01 OPR-01 PA-01
PM-01 PRS-01 P-01 SNP-00 SP-00 SR-00 SS-00
TRSE-00 T-00 USIE-00 USSS-00 ASDS-01 FMP-00 RPE-01
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FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3013
INFO ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
ISLAMIC CONFERENCE COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

Classification Extended on : 04/29/2013 ~ Class:
CONFIDENTIAL ~ Authority: DSCG 11-1 ~ Declassify on:
02/25/2019

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 01 OF 02 JERUSALEM 000653

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PTER, KPAL, ASEC, IS, PBTS, KWBG
SUBJECT: MASSACRE AT TOMB OF PATRIARCHS IN HEBRON

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.
2. SUMMARY. BETWEEN 20 AND 30 PALESTINIANS WERE KILLED AND DOZENS INJURED DURING EARLY MORNING PRAYERS AT THE
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TOMB OF THE PATRIARCHS IN THE SOUTHERN WEST BANK CITY OF HEBRON EARLY MORNING FEBRUARY 25, REPORTEDLY BY AN ISRAELI SETTLER. THE SETTLER MAY HAVE TAKEN HIS LIFE OR BEEN KILLED BY WORSHIPERS. THE WEST BANK, PARTICULARLY HEBRON, IS EXTREMELY TENSE AS CASUALTY NUMBERS CONTINUE TO RISE. CLASHES BETWEEN ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS ARE CONTINUING IN HEBRON, WITH ADDITIONAL PALESTINIANS HAVING BEEN KILLED. CONGEN IS PURSUING DETAILS OF INCIDENT. FAISAL HUSSEINI HAS CONVOKED CONSULAR CORPS TO MEET AT 10:00 AM LOCAL TIME. CONGEN HAS PUT OUT SECURITY ADVISORY URGING AMCITS NOT TO TRAVEL IN EAST JERUSALEM OR THE WEST BANK AND PLANS TO CLOSE ITS EAST JERUSALEM BUILDING EARLY. END SUMMARY.

THE INCIDENT

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Charles Daris, Senior Reviewer

B1
1.4(D)
B6

3. ACCORDING TO LOCAL MEDIA AND [REDACTED] DURING EARLY MORNING PRAYERS (ABOUT 4:30 AM LOCAL) AT THE TOMB OF THE PATRIARCHS IN HEBRON A SINGLE SETTLER, REPORTEDLY FROM THE SETTLEMENT OF KIRYAT ARBA, ENTERED THE SITE AND OPENED FIRE ON THE ASSEMBLED WORSHIPPERS. FAISAL HUSSAINI CONTACTED CONSUL GENERAL AT 0630 TO INFORM HIM OF THE INCIDENT AND THE SERIOUS CASUALTIES THAT HAD TAKEN PLACE. HE EMPHASIZED THE EXPLOSIVENESS OF THE INCIDENT. THERE WERE HEAVY NUMBERS OF WORSHIPPERS FOR EARLY MORNING FRIDAY PRAYERS DURING RAMADAN. [REDACTED] REPORTS 22 DEAD AND AT LEAST 80 INJURED. [REDACTED] IN HEBRON HAS REPORTED 25 DEAD AND UP TO 210 WOUNDED. HEBRON AND THE SURROUNDING AREA HAS BEEN DECLARED A
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CLOSED MILITARY ZONE, AND JOURNALISTS HAVE BEEN BANNED FROM THE AREA. THE WOUNDED ARE REPORTEDLY BEING MOVED TO HOSPITALS OUTSIDE HEBRON, INCLUDING HADASSAH HOSPITAL IN JERUSALEM.

PALESTINIAN REACTION

4. ACCORDING TO CONGEN CONTACTS IN HEBRON, AS OF 9:00 AM LOCAL ARMED CLASHES WERE CONTINUING BETWEEN SETTLERS AND PALESTINIANS AS WELL AS BETWEEN THE IDF AND PALESTINIANS. AT LEAST FOUR ADDITIONAL PALESTINIANS HAVE BEEN KILLED AND OTHERS WOUNDED.

5. [REDACTED] ALSO REPORTS MILITARY OPERATIONS OF SOME KIND IN AL-RAM, BETWEEN JERUSALEM AND RAMALLAH. [REDACTED] ARE ON THE SCENE IN HEBRON AND AT VARIOUS POSSIBLE FLASHPOINTS THROUGHOUT THE WEST BANK. [REDACTED] TOLD POLOFF THEY EXPECT THE WEST BANK TO "EXPLODE." PALESTINIAN SOURCES REPORT THAT CLASHES HAVE BEGUN TAKING PLACE IN RAMALLAH WITH THE IDF.

6. AS NOTED ABOVE, PALESTINIAN LEADER FAISAL HUSSEINI TELEPHONED CG AT 6:30 AM LOCAL TO INFORM HIM OF THE INCIDENT, AND HAS ASKED THE CONSULAR CORPS TO GATHER AT ORIENT HOUSE AT 10:00 AM LOCAL TO DISCUSS THE INCIDENT. CG WILL ATTEND.

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IDF/POLICE REACTION

7. ACCORDING TO OUR POLICE CONTACTS, THE IDF HAS COMPLETELY SEALED OFF THE WEST BANK. ALL LEAVE FOR JERUSALEM POLICE HAVE BEEN CANCELLED AND REINFORCEMENTS ARE BEING BROUGHT INTO THE CITY. FRIDAY PRAYERS WILL LIKELY FURTHER INFLAME THE SITUATION. LAST FRIDAY, THE FIRST SERVICE FOR RAMADAN, THERE WERE OVER 100,000 WORSHIPPERS AT AL AQSA MOSQUE. WE ANTICIPATE FEWER THIS FRIDAY, DUE TO THE CLOSURE OF JERUSALEM BUT WE WILL BE MONITORING THE SITUATION CAREFULLY.

CONGEN ACTIONS

8. CONGEN IS PUTTING OUT A SECURITY NOTICE ADVISING ALL AMCITS TO STAY OUT OF EAST JERUSALEM AND THE WEST BANK UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. CONGEN WILL CLOSE THE EAST JERUSALEM CONSULAR SERVICES BUILDING AT NOON TODAY, AND IS ALLOWING ALL LOCAL EMPLOYEES TO LEAVE EARLIER AS NECESSARY. POLICE AND IDF PROTECTION AT THE NABLUS ROAD BUILDING HAS BEEN STRENGTHENED CONSIDERABLY.

COMMENT

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9. HEBRON, AND THE TOMB OF THE PATRIARCHS IN PARTICULAR, IS THE PLACE WHERE PALESTINIANS AND ISRAELI
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SETTLERS COME INTO MOST INTENSE CONTACT. HEBRON HAS BEEN THE SITE OF FREQUENT INDIVIDUAL STABBINGS AND SHOOTINGS IN THE RECENT PAST, AND WAS THE SITE OF MASSACRES OF JEWS BY PALESTINIANS IN 1929 AND 1980, AND OF PALESTINIANS BY JEWISH SETTLERS IN 1983.

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