(S) *'GWOT Language Forums'* Strive to Overcome Shortage of Capacity in Key Languages

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Run Date: 05/08/2006

(S) We're now four years past 11 September 2001, and the demand for language analyst skills to help fight the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) continues to outpace the supply. How so? GWOT languages pose special challenges for NSA/CSS because:

- the languages are obscure to most English-speaking people,
- NSA lacks structured learning programs/opportunities in these languages,
- we lack lexical aides in English,
- the transnational nature of Sunni extremism encourages multilingualism,
- terrorists deliberately mix languages for communication security,
- the use of different writing systems adds complexity, and
- the GWOT target set is constantly expanding, frequently creating new and often obscure language requirements (e.g. Azeri, Hausa, Bengali and Tubu/Tedegu were just added in 2005 to our mix of language requirements).

(S) Given the ever-increasing amount of foreign-language material collected, it is not enough to increase our language analyst capacity -- it is equally important that we improve our language processing efficiency as well. We need to make broader use of Human-Language Technology (i.e. tools to automate language analysis**) within the work force, and shift away from constraining Cold War-era approaches to language analyst assignment, allocation and administration.

(S) So what are we doing about it? One step was to bring the language, mission and support communities together to discuss options. In February 2006, the NSA/CSS Senior Language Authority, the CT Issue Management Team, and the CT Global Capabilities Manager hosted the first **GWOT Language Forum.** The main objectives were to determine ways to balance our limited language pool of GWOT language analysts against mission requirements; determine ways to expand our language capacity and increase language analyst efficiency; and ensure our support elements (to include but not limited to security, training, hiring, and language programs) were best positioned to help.

(S) The community of interest that met at this first forum reached a common understanding of the mission drivers and developed plans/actions to address many GWOT language issues. For example, lessons learned from the Persian Virtual Language Pool used in Combating Proliferation are being studied and considered for use in other GWOT language environments.

(S//SI) The second GWOT Language Forum, held on 7 April, dug deeper into the highest priority areas identified from session one. Sub-groups met independently and briefed the larger group on their findings. Four of the 8 action plans include such areas as:

- **The CT Mission Priority Matrix** -- how can we most effectively use our scarce and in-high-demand cadre of GWOT language analysts against the highest mission imperatives?

- **Virtual Language Pools and Rapid Response Cells** -- how do we more efficiently use, train and develop the GWOT language analysts we do have?

- **Less Commonly Taught Languages** -- how can we get the maximum amount of SIGINT from a changing number of more obscure languages?

- **Language Capabilities in the non-cryptologic parts of the Armed Forces** -- how do the Armed Forces capture and track the language skills of those not assigned to the Service Cryptologic Elements?

(U//FOUO) The third GWOT Language Forum will follow up on actions taken and progress achieved in each of these areas ... Stay tuned!

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**(U) Notes:
(S//SI) Human Language Technology (HLT) automates content analysis for voice, text, and image communications in English and foreign languages. HLT works upstream and behind the desktop to automatically --

- identify languages and speakers of interest
- transcribe foreign language intercept into native orthography
- translate from foreign language into English
- extract critical information from unstructured data
- prioritize traffic for analyst review