



**(S//REL) A Firsthand View of Pakistan and Its SIGINTers**

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*(S//SI) NSA's relationship with Pakistani intelligence is of high importance. An IA intern had the opportunity to see the relationship close-up...*

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(S//REL) I recently had the opportunity to travel to Pakistan with a group of coworkers from various Product Lines and organizations throughout NSA for the Annual Planning Conference (APC) with our Pakistani Partner, the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate, Technical (DGT). I cannot think of a better way to end my 3-year internship in the Intelligence Analysis Development Program (IADP), and the experiences that I've had in the Foreign Affairs Directorate (FAD), topped off by my trip to Pakistan, will stay with me throughout my career.



*(U) Author poses with rifle*

(S//SI) I landed in FAD (NSA's Foreign Affairs Directorate) for my sixth and final IA Intern tour as the Assistant Country Desk Officer for Pakistan, hoping to learn a little bit about how NSA works with its Third Party Partners on the Counterterrorism mission. Experiencing Pakistan firsthand at the APC was a fascinating experience for me because I was able to witness negotiations with our Partner up-close and personal. Having spent most of my time in SID working with our technologically savvy Second Party Partners, this was quite an eye-opening experience for me.

(S//SI) Actually being in-country allowed me to get a sense of the cultural and economic factors that influence Pakistan to make the decisions it makes as a state. In large part, Pakistan lacks the competitive and entrepreneurial edge that drives innovation in capitalist states, and this is apparent in its SIGINT apparatus. As one observer on the trip noted, Pakistan is in a natural state of rest.

(S//SI) DGT's technology is at least 10 years -- if not many more -- behind ours. And not surprisingly, even their technical academic knowledge is on a different level -- not because they are any less intelligent, but more as a result of the level and quality of training available in Pakistan. Of course this lag is caused by many factors, not the least of which is economic. Pakistan is, after all, a developing nation. That being said, NSA has a vested interest in making Pakistan into a first-class SIGINT organization because of its geopolitical standing in the world -- it is home to a large number of Al-Qa'ida Senior Leadership (most likely to include UBL and Zawahiri), not to mention other terrorist organizations, and provides a pipeline for narcotics trafficking.

(U//FOUO) On a lighter note, the Partner escorted us on some very interesting cultural excursions, including a shopping trip to Rawalpindi...



...a visit to the King Faisal Mosque (built by the King of Saudi Arabia as a gift to the newly independent Pakistan), and a trip up a dangerously narrow and steep road to the beautiful Margalla Hills Park, which overlooks Islamabad:



...We were escorted at all times by a cadre of four security guards armed with AK-47s, so we felt pretty safe for the most part. I enjoyed the food immensely and have to agree with the

Pakistanis that they have the best rice in the world!

(S//REL) The negotiations at the APC were difficult at times and trust has always been an issue on both sides of the partnership. Pakistan struggles with the anti-American sentiment that runs ripe throughout the country, but the government claims to be committed to standing by the US as its friend and partner. My sojourn to Pakistan opened my eyes to the relationships that NSA has beyond our English-speaking allies and I gained an understanding of Pakistan's contribution to many NSA missions.

(U) So, what did I learn? Here are a few nuggets:

- (S) What NSA wants isn't necessarily what the partner wants.
- (S) What the partner wants isn't always something NSA is willing to give.
- (U) We both may be speaking English, but that doesn't mean we understand each other.
- (U) If you're a woman, don't be overly offended if a Pakistani man refuses to shake your hand.

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