



(S//SI//REL) Renewed Interest in the Tunisian Partnership

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Run Date: 12/22/2006

(S//SI//REL) Tunisian partner has language and target expertise on terrorist group.

(S//SI//REL) In early September, several NSAers* traveled to Tunisia for meetings with the Tunisian partner (DSC). While the focus was on the upcoming joint SATCOM collection effort, significant time was spent discussing other Global War on Terrorism areas on which NSA and DSC could work more closely.

(S//SI//REL) With the recent elevation of the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) terrorist group from a Tier 1 to Tier 0 target, there is renewed TOPI** (ESOC) interest in broader SIGINT cooperation with the Tunisian partner. DSC offers language and target expertise that NSA cannot obtain from other Second or Third Party partners. They also have territorial/signal accesses that are unique to the successful prosecution of this high priority target. These include both fiber and V/UHF collection accesses along the Libyan and Algerian borders.

(S//SI//REL) All discussions proceeded smoothly and the TOPI was extremely pleased with the Tunisian partner's willingness to collaborate more closely on regional Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) collection efforts, and the GSPC target in particular. Their offer of language support and access to existing DSC collection sites makes them an excellent candidate for broader SIGINT cooperation. During the course of their visit, the FAD and CT team were provided the opportunity to visit one of three Tunisian collection sites along the Algerian border. This site, located near Kasserine at an elevation of 5,000 feet, provides a unique look along the eastern Algerian border. The other two sites, at Ain Draham and Le Kef, offer similar views at 2500-foot elevations.

(S//SI//REL) The three sites are currently collecting VHF/UHF Algerian comms, however with more advanced collection suites there is potential for intercept of higher value targets to include locally active North African and GSPC extremists. A future initiative that the ESOC would like to explore is a GSM and terrestrial microwave signal survey from these Western border sites to characterize these comms and their related infrastructure. Although the subject was not discussed with the partner on this trip, indications are that they would welcome the opportunity to collaborate on this initiative and provide operational and personnel resources to support the effort.

(S//SI//REL) Overall, the trip was a success. It afforded the ESOC and NSA/CT TDYers an opportunity to meet with the partner in order to assess their language and analytic capabilities. The technical members of the ESOC team were also able to make determinations on what equipment and infrastructure upgrades may be needed to better support the upcoming SATOM survey. Higher-level discussions resulted in a dialogue on greater cooperation in the GWOT. All TDYers were pleased with the outcome of the trip.

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(U) GSPE seal.

(U) Notes:

* (S//SI//REL) The NSAers included: the Country Desk Officer and Technical Language Mentor for Tunisia, the European Security Operations Center (ESOC) Counterterrorism (CT) Division Chief, and an NSA CT Issue Managers Team (IMT) member.

** (U) TOPI = Target Office of Primary Interest

(U//FOUO) This article is reprinted from the *Foreign Affairs Digest* , November edition.

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DERIVED FROM: NSA/CSSM 1-52, DATED 08 JAN 2007 DECLASSIFY ON: 20320108