(S//REL TO USA, FVEY) Topic: NSA's Posture on the Evolving Situation in Syria

(U//FOUO) Director's Talking Points:

- (TS//SI//OC/REL TO USA, FVEY) Syria remains locked in a protracted struggle, with both the opposition and the regime firmly entrenched in their positions. Attempts to coalesce the opposition have moved extremely slowly, while the regime has not in any way indicated that it would willingly stand aside. Given this lack of movement in negotiations and the stalemate on the ground, we anticipate the conflict will not be resolved in an expedient manner.
- (TS//SI//OC/REL TO USA, FVEY) NSA continues to monitor the situation in Syria from all angles, including from the viewpoint of the regional, international, and radical actors. NSA remains concerned about chemical weapons security and continues to monitor the situation closely, to the best of our ability.

(U//FOUO) SIGINT Director's Talking Points:

- (TS//SI//REL TO USA, FVEY) Syria crisis response in the intelligence community encompasses not only extended SIGINT production support, but also in parallel, tailored support to Combatant Command crisis-related planning and operations.
- (TS//SI//REL TO USA, FVEY) Effective 24/7 SIGINT support is in place through combined hours provided by the NSA extended enterprise and our 2nd Party Partners.

(TS//SI//REL TO USA, FVEY) Background: While the crisis in Syria has evolved into a protracted struggle, the situation on the ground continues to deteriorate and violence continues to escalate. The regime has become increasingly heavy-handed and the opposition is acquiring larger and more advanced weaponry. Meanwhile, the Islamic extremists, particularly the al-Qa'ida-affiliated al-Nusrah Front, are increasing their presence and operational footprint. Attempts to coalesce the opposition into a united and effective body have progressed extremely slowly, while Syrian regime leadership appears committed to remaining in place until the bitter end. The international community remains concerned over the security of chemical and biological weapons as well as the degrading humanitarian situation.

(TS//SI//REL TO USA, FVEY) Regional implications of the continuing violence include:

- Refugee care and humanitarian support for civilians inside and outside of Syria;
- Financial and material support to opposition by Arab states, including Qatar and Saudi Arabia;
- Material support for regime and force augmentation by Iran, Lebanese Hizballah, and Russia;
- Spill-over violence and destabilization in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey; and
- Potential for an extremist enclave (al-Qa'ida/al-Nusrah Front) in Syria.

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(U) Analytic Posture:

- (TS//SI//OC/REL TO USA, GBR) NSA's access to internal Syrian communications, especially those involving Syria's military, internal security forces, and chemical/biological weapons security, [redacted] This insight ranges from poor to fair, [redacted] **GCHQ provides some** [redacted] **from their site on Mt. Troodos, Cyprus.**
- (TS//SI//OC/REL TO USA, FVEY) Our insight into Syrian regime leadership activities is extremely limited [redacted]
- (TS//SI//OC/REL TO USA, FVEY) Our insight into Syrian internal armed opposition activities is drawn from warranted collection and is quite robust at the leadership level.
- (TS//SI//OC/REL TO USA, GBR) NSA works closely with GCHQ on the Syrian opposition target and established a formal geographic-based division of effort with GCHQ on opposition targets to better deal with this large and prolific target. **GCHQ covers the northern military commands of Idlib, Aleppo and Hamah, as well as the coastal areas of Latakia and Tartus.**
- (TS//SI//OC/REL TO USA, GBR) Regime leadership targets are worked cooperatively, [redacted]
- (TS//SI//OC//NF) **GCHQ has freely acknowledged, on numerous occasions, that the bulk of their reporting on Syria is readdressals of NSA product.** They have also noted that they convey this fact to their customers in London, on a regular basis.
- (TS//SI//OC//NF) **GCHQ Digby has a nascent effort to further develop and monitor the Syrian security services located in the Syrian coastal region**, as the Intelligence Community assesses that the Syrian regime will relocate and create a strong-hold there should Damascus fall. This effort will, however, be limited by the very small number of analysts available (fewer than 5), as well as the fact that they will not work these targets on a 24/7 basis.
- (TS//SI//OC//NF) Our recent increase in cooperation dovetails with **GCHQ's recent surge on Syria,** bringing together analysts from their CT and CP organizations to work cooperatively with the MEA experts. **However, their ability to contribute significantly to the overall Syria SIGINT effort is hampered by GCHQ resource limitations**: their surged team, encompassing various elements (CT, CP, SIGDEV) consists of 35 personnel, while NSA has 200+ working the analytics, alone.

(U) Potential Landmine: None.

(U) Date of Material: 12 April 2013

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(U//FOUO) Alt. POC: [redacted] S2E Foreign Partner Strategist, [redacted]

(U//FOUO) Classification Review By: [redacted], S2E Chief of Staff, [redacted]