

HPSCI Talking Points for Use with the Media
14 September 2012

- We believe based on currently available information that the attacks in Benghazi were spontaneously inspired by the protests at the US Embassy in Cairo and evolved into a direct assault against the US Consulate and subsequently its annex. This assessment may change as additional information is collected and analyzed and currently available information continues to be evaluated.
- The crowd almost certainly was a mix of individuals from across many sectors of Libyan society. That being said, we do know that Islamic extremists with ties to al-Qa'ida participated in the attack.
- Initial press reporting linked the attack to Ansar al-Sharia. The group has since released a statement that its leadership did not order the attacks, but did not deny that some of its members were involved. Ansar al-Sharia's facebook page aims to spread sharia in Libya and emphasizes the need for jihad to counter what it views as false interpretations of Islam, according to an open source study.
- The wide availability of weapons and experienced fighters in Libya almost certainly contributed to the lethality of the attacks.
- Since April, there have been at least five other attacks against foreign interests in Benghazi by unidentified assailants, including the June attack against the British Ambassador's convoy. We cannot rule out that individuals had previously surveilled the US facilities, also contributing to the efficacy of the attacks.
- We are working with Libyan authorities and intelligence partners in an effort to help bring to justice those responsible for the deaths of US citizens.

CIA
OPA

From: CIA OPA
Sent: Friday, September 14, 2012 3:04 PM
To: Vietor, Tommy, Rhodes, Benjamin J.; NSS PRESS
Cc: WH PRESS
CIA OCA
Subject: HPSCI talking points for review

Colleagues:

HPSCI has requested talking points from the DCIA for use with the media.

Please review the below and respond with your comments ASAP.

Thanks very much,

CIA
OPA

Chief, Media Relations
CIA Office of Public Affairs

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We believe based on currently available information that the attacks in Benghazi were spontaneously inspired by the protests at the US Embassy in Cairo and evolved into a direct assault against the US Consulate and subsequently its annex. This assessment may change as additional information is collected and analyzed and currently available information continues to be evaluated.

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From: CIA
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To: CIA OPA; Vietor, Tommy; Rhodes, Benjamin J.; NSS PRESS
Cc: WH PRESS
Subject: RE: HPSCI talking points for review

Colleagues:

We still have a number of components coordinating here on these points and we will have further edits. We are multi-tasking due to the time constraints.

I'll send you an updated version around 1600 today.

Thanks,

CIA OPA

From: CIA OPA
Sent: Friday, September 14, 2012 3:04 PM
To: Vietor, Tommy; Rhodes, Benjamin J.; NSS PRESS, WH PRESS
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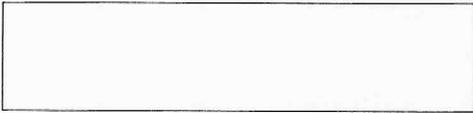
CIA
OPA

Chief, Media Relations
CIA Office of Public Affairs

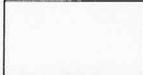
**HPSCI Talking Points for Use with the Media
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- The crowd almost certainly was a mix of individuals from across many sectors of Libyan society. That being said, we do know that Islamic extremists with ties to al-Qa'ida participated in the attack.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



From: Stephen W. Preston
General Counsel



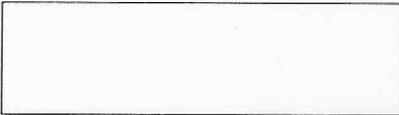
Date: 09/14/2012 04:20 PM

Subject: Re: Looping ODNCS -- Re: Fw: FLASH coordination --
white paper for HPSCI Per DCIA Request

To: OGC, CIA FO
Cc: CIA OTA, NE, NCS, NCS, CTC

This message is digitally signed.

Classification: ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



Folks, I know there is a hurry to get this out, but we need to hold it long enough to ascertain whether providing it conflicts with express instructions from NSS/DOJ/FBI that, in light of the criminal investigation, we are not to generate statements with assessments as to who did this, etc. -- even internally, not to mention for public release. I am copying CIA FO who may be more familiar with those instructions and the tasking arising from the HPSCI coffee.

OGC

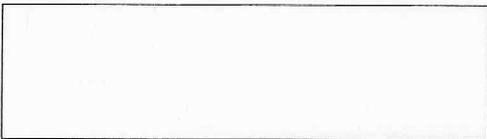
Classification: ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ Classified By: 2...

09/14/2012 03:29:32 PM

From: OGC
To: CIA OTA
Cc: NCS, NCS, CTC, CTC, CIA FO, DIR, CIAOCA, CIA FO, DIA, CIA OTA, Stephen W. Preston/STF/AGENCY@WMA, CIA OPA

Date: 09/14/2012 03:29 PM
Subject: Re: Looping ODNCS -- Re: Fw: FLASH coordination -- white paper for HPSCI Per DCIA Request

Classification: ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



OGC coords. on the TPs, including the change to the second tick noted by CIA OTA

All content within this email, including attachments and email threads, carry the controls even when not specified in the classification line unless otherwise noted.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

UNCLASSIFIED



From: Subject: HPSCI White Paper Talking Points for review before
Chief, Media Relations Branch White House
Office of Public Affairs To:
Date: 09/14/2012 04:42 PM Cc:

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

For review before sending to the White House:

HPSCI White Paper Talking Points for Use with the Media

14 September 2012

- The currently available information suggests that the demonstrations in Benghazi were spontaneously inspired by the protests at the US Embassy in Cairo and evolved into a direct assault against the US Consulate and subsequently its annex. This assessment may change as additional information is collected and analyzed and currently available information continues to be evaluated. On 10 September we warned of social media reports calling for a demonstration in front of the Embassy and that jihadists were threatening to break into the Embassy.
- The crowd almost certainly was a mix of individuals from across many sectors of Libyan society. The investigation is on-going as to who is responsible. That being said, we do know that Islamic extremists participated in the violent demonstrations.
- Initial press reporting linked the attack to Ansar al-Sharia. The group has since released a statement that its leadership did not order the attacks, but did not deny that some of its members were involved. Ansar al-Sharia's Facebook page aims to spread sharia in Libya and emphasizes the need for jihad to counter what it views as false interpretations of Islam, according to an open source study.
- The wide availability of weapons and experienced fighters in Libya almost certainly contributed to the lethality of the attacks.

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•The Agency has produced numerous pieces on the threat of extremists linked to al-Qaeda in Benghazi and eastern Libya. These noted that, since April, there have been at least five other attacks against foreign interests in Benghazi by unidentified assailants, including the June attack against the British Ambassador's convoy. We cannot rule out that individuals had previously surveilled the US facilities, also contributing to the efficacy of the attacks.

•The US Government is working with Libyan authorities and intelligence partners in an effort to help bring to justice those responsible for the deaths of US citizens.

CIA OPR

Chief, Media Relations Branch, Office of Public Affairs

Secure:

Open:

=====
Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

CIA OPA

From: Viator, Tommy.[Thomas_F_Viator@who.eop.gov]

Sent: Friday, September 14, 2012 4:57 PM

To: CIA OPA Rhodes, Benjamin J.; NSS PRESS

Cc: WJN PRESS
CIA OCA

Subject: RE: HPSCI talking points for review

CIA OPA is there an updated version of this I can circulate internally?

From: CIA OPA

Sent: Friday, September 14, 2012 3:27 PM

To: CIA OPA Viator, Tommy; Rhodes, Benjamin J.; NSS PRESS, WJN PRESS

Cc: CIA OCA

Subject: RE: HPSCI talking points for review

Colleagues:

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CIA Office of Public Affairs

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CIA OPA

From: [CIA OPA]
Sent: Friday, September 14, 2012 5:04 PM
To: Vietor, Tommy; Rhodes, Benjamin J.; [NSS PRESS]
Cc: [CIA OPA], [CIA OCA], [CIA OPA]
Subject: RE: HPSCI talking points for review

Tommy:

Very sorry for the delay. We've been steadily working on them and they are now at the final stop before coming to you soon. I'll rush them to you as soon as possible.

CIA OPA

From: Vietor, Tommy [mailto:Thomas.F.Vietor@who.eop.gov]
Sent: Friday, September 14, 2012 4:57 PM
To: [CIA OPA] Rhodes, Benjamin J.; [NSS PRESS, WA PRESS]
Cc: [CIA OPA]
Subject: RE: HPSCI talking points for review

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Cc: [CIA OCA]
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CIA OPA

From: [redacted] OA
Sent: Friday, September 14, 2012 5:05 PM
To: [redacted] CIA OPA
Cc: [redacted] CIA OCA
Subject: RE: HPSCI talking points for review

Should we include Shawn Turner on the coord for the points?

From: [redacted] CIA OPA
Sent: Friday, September 14, 2012 3:27 PM
To: [redacted] Vietor, Tommy; Rhodes, Benjamin J.; [redacted] NSS PRESS, WH PRESS
Cc: [redacted] CIA OCA
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[redacted] CIA OPA

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[redacted]

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14 September 2012

CIA OPA

From: CIA OPA
Sent: Friday, September 14, 2012 5:09 PM
To: OA
Cc: CIA OPA
Subject: RE: HPSCI talking points for review

Thanks for the reminder. Yes, I told him we would.

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NSS PRESS, WNI PRESS

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