

26 January 2001

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] *Bin Ladin's roots in Afghanistan:*

Bin Ladin during the latter half of the decade of the 1980s became associated with the resistance to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Reports of his personal involvement in combat appear exaggerated. [REDACTED] 01

By early 1990, Bin Ladin was linked to [REDACTED] a nongovernmental organization that recruited foreign Muslims to fight in Afghanistan, [REDACTED] Bin Ladin [REDACTED] forged ties to the leaders of the two most radical Afghan mujahidin parties, Gulbuddin Hikmatyar of Hizbi Islami (Gulbuddin) and Abdul Rasul Sayyaf of the Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan. Hikmatyar and Sayyaf—who were not part of the Taliban—set up some of the training camps for foreign militants now operating in Taliban-controlled areas.

- Hikmatyar—[REDACTED]—was driven from his stronghold by the Taliban in 1996, allied briefly with a rival, then fled to Iran later that year after Kabul fell.
- Sayyaf remains in Afghanistan as part of the opposition, [REDACTED] Sayyaf maintains occasional contact with Bin Ladin's organization. [REDACTED] 01

Most of the Taliban's current leaders were commanders or fighters with two of the mujahidin factions fighting the Soviets, Hizbi Islami (Khalis) (HIK) and Harakat-I-Inqilab-Islami. Yunis Khalis, chief of the HIK, knew Bin Ladin during the anti-Soviet jihad. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

- The Taliban in August 1996 swept through eastern Afghanistan, where Bin Ladin was headquartered. [REDACTED] the Taliban, [REDACTED] had assumed responsibility for Bin Ladin's protection [REDACTED] 01

For further information, contact the Chief, DCI Counterterrorist Center Assessment Group on [REDACTED] secure.