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Country Report on Terrorism 2018 - Chapter 5 - Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan

Aka Pakistani Taliban; Tehreek-e-Taliban; Tehrik-e-Taliban; Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan; TTP.

Description: Designated as a FTO on September 1, 2010, Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is a Pakistan- and Afghanistan-based terrorist organization formed in 2007 to oppose Pakistani military efforts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (formerly known as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas). Previously disparate tribal militants agreed to cooperate and eventually coalesced into TTP under the leadership of now-deceased leader Baitullah Mehsud. Mullah Fazlullah headed the group until his death in June 2018. TTP then named Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud as the group's new leader. TTP entered into peace talks with the Pakistani government in early 2014, but the talks collapsed in June of that year. In October 2014, the chief spokesperson and five regional commanders defected from TTP and publicly pledged allegiance to ISIS.

TTP aims to push the Government of Pakistan out of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and establish Sharia law by waging a terrorist campaign against the Pakistani military and state. TTP uses the tribal belt along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border to train and deploy its operatives, and the group has ties to al-Qa'ida (AQ). TTP draws ideological guidance from AQ, while elements of AQ rely in part on TTP for safe haven in the Pashtun areas along the Afghanistan-Pakistani border. This arrangement has given TTP access to both AQ's global terrorist network and its members' operational expertise.

Activities: TTP has carried out and claimed responsibility for numerous terrorist acts against Pakistani and U.S. interests, including a December 2009 suicide attack on a U.S. military base in Khost, Afghanistan, which killed seven U.S. citizens; and an April 2010 suicide bombing against the U.S. Consulate in Peshawar, Pakistan, which killed six Pakistani citizens. TTP is suspected of involvement in the 2007 assassination of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. TTP directed and facilitated Faisal Shahzad's failed attempt to detonate an explosive device in New York City's Times Square on May 1, 2010.

Between 2011 and 2018, TTP continued to carry out attacks against the Government of Pakistan and Pakistani civilian targets, and against U.S. targets in Pakistan. In 2012, TTP carried out attacks against a mosque, a police checkpoint, a Pakistani Air Force base, and a bus carrying Shia Muslims. In 2013, TTP attacked churches, the home of a government minister in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province, and a Shia neighborhood in

Karachi, Pakistan. TTP's attacks in 2013 killed and wounded hundreds of civilians and Pakistani government and law enforcement officials. In 2014, TTP targeted military and police convoys, bazaars, buses, and schools. The group carried out two consecutive attacks against Karachi's international airport and a siege on a primary school in Peshawar, Pakistan that killed 145 people, 132 of whom were children. Throughout 2015, TTP focused many of its small-scale attacks on Pakistani government and law enforcement officials by targeting convoys, government buildings, motorcades, and police checkpoints. The group also bombed a Shia mosque near Peshawar and conducted suicide bombings at two churches in Lahore. In 2016, the group continued carrying out attacks, claiming responsibility for a December attack that left the Deputy Superintendent of the police counterterrorism department dead and his son injured in an attack on their vehicle in Peshawar.

TTP attacks in 2017 included several suicide bombings, among them a February attack that targeted a protest in Lahore, a March attack on a mosque in northwestern Pakistan, and a July attack in Lahore that killed 26 people. In December 2017, TTP militants disguised as women stormed an agricultural training school in Peshawar, leaving nine dead including the attackers.

TTP's attacks continued in 2018. In February 2018, TTP claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing that resulted in the deaths of at least 11 Pakistani security personnel in Swat, Pakistan. TTP also claimed responsibility for a March 2018 suicide bombing that targeted a checkpoint on the outskirts of Lahore, resulting in the deaths of four police officers and two civilians.

Strength: The group consists of several thousand fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: TTP operates in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Funding and External Aid: TTP likely raises most of its funds through kidnapping-for-ransom payments, extortion, and other criminal activity.

ecoi.net summary:

Brief description of Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (Excerpt of chapter 5 of the country report on terrorism 2018)



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Austrian Red Cross

Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research
and Documentation (ACCORD)

Wiedner Hauptstraße 32, 1041 Wien

T (Telefon) +43 1 589 00 583

F (Fax) +43 1 589 00 589

info@ecoi.net

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