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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

16 April 1987

Afghanistan Crop Update: Precipitation Patterns and
Field Activity, March 15-31 1987 [redacted]

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Summary

Our analysis of meteorological satellite imagery and weather reports during the period 15-31 March 1987 indicates precipitation has continued to fall over all but the southernmost provinces in Afghanistan. - Field work continues throughout the country and, in general, the agricultural situation in Afghanistan appears to be normal for this stage of the crop year. [redacted]

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This memorandum was prepared by [redacted] the Agricultural Assessments Branch, Strategic Resources Division, Office of Global Issues. The information contained herein is updated to 31 March 1987. Comments may be directed to [redacted] Chief, Agricultural Assessments Branch, Strategic Resources Division, [redacted]

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Precipitation Patterns and Amounts: 15-31 March 1987

During late March, precipitation continued to fall throughout Afghanistan. Significant amounts of snow fell in the Northern provinces and in the mountains north of Kabul. In addition, Maymanah in Faryab Province reported large amounts of rainfall in mid-March, as well as--and more significantly for crops--regular precipitation for the remainder of the month. Faryab Province has been identified as the epicenter of the 1971-72 drought, and precipitation there is being viewed by some analysts as a key to predicting the possibilities for another drought this year. Finally, not included in these statistics are reports of heavy snowfall (15 to 20 inches) in the Salang region.

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MM Precipitation
March 1987

LOCATION/DATE													MARCH TOTALS	
	15	18	20	21	22	24	25	27	28	29	30	31	1987	15-YEAR MEAN
FEYZABAD	0	12	0	0	0	0	0			3			29	93
MAYMANAH	29	1	3	4	4	0	0	4	12	8	1	1	88	83
HERAT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1	4	5	43
KABUL	16	2	7	0	11	2	8	0	11	8		3	107	73
GHAZNI	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	3	5	10	22	40	63
QANDAHAR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1		1	22

These data reflect precipitation reported by Afghanistan weather stations and should be considered minimum data. Weather stations in Afghanistan are required to report precipitation every 12 hours, but they only take observations during one of those 12-hour periods. Consequently, it is very likely that actual precipitation amounts could exceed those reported.

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Work in Afghanistan's farmlands continues, including in dry lands and in areas not served by the country's extensive irrigation system. Farmers are plowing and sowing throughout most of the country. Moreover, water levels in irrigation systems are rising and should provide sufficient moisture for this year's growing season. This is significant because stations reporting little precipitation--Herat, Qandahar, Feyzabad--are in areas served by these irrigation systems, by rivers or by precipitation that was not reported.

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OGI/SRD/AAB [redacted] (16 April 1987)

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