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ACTION WHA-00

INFO LOG-00 MFA-00 EEB-00 VCI-00 A-00 ACQ-00 INL-00
 DODE-00 PDI-00 DS-00 AVC-00 UTED-00 SIPD-00 DIAS-00
 H-00 TEDE-00 INR-00 L-00 MOFM-00 MOF-00 VCIE-00
 NSAE-00 ISN-00 OES-00 OMB-00 PA-00 PM-00 PRS-00
 P-00 ISNE-00 SP-00 SS-00 TRSE-00 T-00 ASDS-00
 BBG-00 IIP-00 PMB-00 DSCC-00 LBA-00 DRL-00 G-00
 SAS-00 /000W

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RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(D)

R 152235Z FEB 11
 FM AMCONSUL MATAMOROS
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0362
 INFO ALL US CONSULATES IN MEXICO COLLECTIVE
 WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
 HQ BICE INTEL WASHINGTON DC
 HQ NORAD USNORTHCOM INTEL PETERSON AFB CO
 ICE CORPUS CHRISTI TX
 DEA HQS WASHINGTON DC
 DEA MCALLEN TX
 EPIC EL PASO TX
 CIA WASHINGTON DC
 US CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION WASHINGTON DC
 FBI WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS MATAMOROS 000074

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 13526: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PREL, SNAR, KJUS, MX, ASEC

SUBJECT: February 14: A Day of Violence in Tamaulipas

1. Summary: February 14 was the most violent day in the Matamoros Consular District since the massacre of 72 migrants in August 2010. In the cities of Nuevo Padilla, San Fernando, and Ciudad Victoria 26 people were killed in attacks linked to Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs). Also, in what appears to be an attempt by the Los Zetas TCO to draw attention to their Matamoros-based rival the Gulf Cartel (CDG), a grenade was thrown in a popular Matamoros shopping district, injuring nine civilians. This is the largest attack on the civilian population of Matamoros in recent history. End Summary.

Massacre in Padilla

2. A series of early-morning attacks left 18 people dead in Padilla, 11 of them civilians. According to press reports at approximately 0130 a group of gunmen opened fire in the central plaza, damaging the courthouse and municipal headquarters. At some

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point in the night the bodies of seven people were dumped in the central plaza. In a later incident, five civilians travelling in personal vehicles and one passenger on a commercial bus were killed in the crossfire between unknown groups of gunmen. Press reports also state that five other civilians were killed, but cannot confirm the location(s). Sources report that at 0325 approximately seven men stopped a bus traveling on the Ciudad Victoria-Matamoros highway. The men forced all 23 passengers to disembark, stole everything they had, but released them unharmed. On February 15 several narcomantas signed by Los Zetas and blaming the CDG for the Padilla attacks appeared in Ciudad Victoria.

Violence in San Fernando and Ciudad Victoria

3. In the city of San Fernando, 84 miles south of Matamoros, authorities discovered four bodies near three burned vehicles. Press reports indicate that the deaths were narco-related.

4. An unknown assailant killed a police officer in Ciudad Victoria. (Note: Attacks on police officers are usually perpetrated by TCOs, either to eliminate honest police officers or, more often, to eliminate police allied to a rival TCO. End note.) Grenade in Matamoros

5. At approximately 1900 a grenade detonated in front of a shop on Matamoros' busy walking mall, approximately one mile from the Consulate and USG housing. Nine civilians were injured, including a six-year-old girl. Press reports indicate that at least two of the nine were severely injured.

6. Comment: The attacks in Padilla appear to have been perpetrated by the Gulf TCO against local Zetas at the same time as Mexican military forces were heavily involved in fighting Zetas in nearby San Fernando. Sources believe that the grenade in Matamoros was an attempt by the Los Zetas TCO to "heat up the plaza" there for the locally-dominant CDG. The heavy coverage of the event by the CDG-controlled local press indicates Los Zetas involvement as the CDG does not allow publicity of its own activities.

What appears to be a fragment of the device which detonated on the shopping street in Matamoros.

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