

## Al Qa'ida Central

Al Qa'ida central posed the most significant threat to the United States. As Figure 6.3 illustrates, much of al Qa'ida's presence was located in an area that began around the Bajaur tribal agency in Pakistan and Konar province in Afghanistan and snaked southward along the border to South Waziristan in Pakistan and Paktika province in Afghanistan. In this area, al Qa'ida was involved in an array of activities, such as strategic planning, information operations, training, and bomb-making for its global terrorist efforts and its more localized efforts in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

On the international front, there was significant evidence of al Qa'ida involvement in high-profile international attacks from its base in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The connection between affiliated units and central al Qa'ida elements can be critical. Central al Qa'ida can provide inspiration, technical expertise (such as the use of hydrogen peroxide), money, and overall guidance. The 2005 terrorist attack in

**Figure 6.3**  
**Al Qa'ida's Base of Support, 2008**



RAND MG741-6.3