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CA: This Periodic Review Board is being conducted at 0900 hours on 08 March 2016, with regard to the following detainee: Saifullah Paracha, ISN 1094.

As a reminder, the unclassified portions of these proceedings are being recorded for the purpose of generating a transcript to be posted on the PRS website.

Representatives from the following agencies are present and are members of the Board:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE;

DEPARTMENT OF STATE;

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE;

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY;

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE; AND,

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF.

The following personnel are also present:

LEGAL ADVISOR TO THE BOARD;

CASE ADMINISTRATORS;

PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES;

A TRANSLATOR;

THE DETAINEE; AND,

SECURITY OFFICER.

The detainee's Personal Representatives, Private Counsel, and

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the detainee are located at the detention facility, U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. They are attending via video teleconference. This session is being observed by foreign, national, and local media, Foreign Government Officials and representatives from Non-Governmental agencies [sic].

PM: Good... good morning. Does the detainee wish to waive translation of the entire hearing, including the unclassified summary... unclassified written statements provided by the Personal Representatives, and Private Counsel, and the detainee statement?

PR 1: Yes, Ma'am. The detainee wishes to waive translation.

PM: Thank you. Regarding translation during the hearing, then, all parties are going to proceed in English due to the detainee's proficiency. The Board is called to order. The Board is convened to determine whether continued law of war detention is warranted for Saifullah Parach... Paracha, ISN 1094, in order to protect against a continuing significant threat to the security of the United States. From here on out, we'll refer to the detainee as Saifullah.

The hearing session is unclassified.

Saifullah, this is your Periodic Review Board to determine whether continued law of war detention is warranted in your case. Your continued law of war detention will be warranted if it is necessary to protect against a continuing significant threat to the

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national security of the United States. This focus of this hearing is on the threat you may pose to the United States and its interests if transferred or released. It is not on the lawfulness of your detention.

The Personal Representatives and Private Counsel are your representatives to assist you during this process.

Personal Representatives and Private Counsel, has the detainee had an opportunity to review the unclassified summary?

PC: Yes, Ma'am.

PM: All right. I'll read the unclassified summary:

Saifullah Paracha, ISN 1094, was a Pakistan-based businessman and facilitator on behalf of al-Qaeda senior leaders and operational planners. He met Osama Bin Ladin in the early 2000s and later worked with external operations chief Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, ISN-10024, to facilitate financial transactions and develop media. In 2003, Saifullah and his U.S.-based oldest son, Uzair, tried to help an al-Qaeda operative travel to the United States, an effort for which Uzair was convicted in November 2005 and is now serving a 30-year sentence in the United States. Prior to his detention, Saifullah also conducted research on chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear materials, probably on his own initiative, and offered operational suggestions to al-Qaeda, including advice on how to

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smuggle explosives into the United States, that al-Qaeda planners probably did not take seriously.

Since his arrival at Guantanamo, Saifullah has shown no indication of extremist sympathies in his interrogations, interactions with other detainees and guard staff. However, he has shown no remorse for having worked with al-Qaeda before his detention. While in Guantanamo, Saifullah has been very compliant with the detention staff and espouses moderate views and acceptance of Western norms. He has focused on improving cell block conditions and helping some detainees improve their English language and business skills. Saifullah regular [sic] participated in interrogations until 2015 and offered some information about al-Qaeda operatives, but generally has avoided incriminating himself or Uzair, his son. Saifullah continues to deny that he knew of any al-Qaeda plotting and claims he undertook his terrorist activities for profit rather than out of loyalty to the group.

Saifullah would probably consider relocating to an English-speaking country and has expressed interest in returning to the United States, where he attended graduate school and lived throughout the 1970s and early 1980s. If he returned to Pakistan, Saifullah probably would resume running the family businesses and would seek out opportunities to begin new ventures. However, the extensive

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extremist business contacts he established before his detention, which also include members of the Taliban and Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, could provide him opportunities to reengage in extremist activity should he choose to do so. While at Guantanamo, he befriended former detainee Jarallah al-Marri, ISN 334, who had ties to al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and possibly ISIL.

Do the Personal Representatives and Private Counsel wish to make unclassified opening statements at this time?

PR 1: Yes, Ma'am.

PM: All right. I'd like to remind all participants that information shared at this time must be unclassified. If there's a concern about the classification of information, I'll indicate as such and we'll stop the proceedings until we can resolve the issue.

Has the detainee had an opportunity to review the statements?

PR 2: Yes, Ma'am.

PM: Okay. Please proceed.

PR 1: Good morning, we are the Personal Representatives for Saifullah Abdullah Paracha, a 68-year old man who has always been an exemplary detainee evident in both his behavior for fellow detainees and towards the administration. As the Personal Representatives for Saifullah, we can account that he has attended every meeting, been prepared and readily willing to participate throughout this process.

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In addition, he has persuaded other detainees to participate in the PRB process in order to sagaciously participate in their own PRB allowing a better process. He has a calm demeanor. His consistent character demonstrates he will remain the same peaceful and stable person outside of GTMO.

Saifullah would be the first to tell you that he has no problem with the United States. His ability to speak both English and Urdu has enabled him to teach other detainees, as well as be a mediator between fellow Urdu-speaking detainees allowing communications in a closed off community. As one of the oldest detainees in Guantanamo, many of his peers look to him for guidance and even consider Saifullah a father figure. He hopes that his transfer from Guantanamo will make up for the lost years of his life. Saifullah wants nothing more than to return to his loving wife and children. He is willing to be transferred to any country in order to move on with his life.

Saifullah was an extremely successful businessman and once he is transferred, he wants to continue his business. He has the skill set and talent to be successful in whatever country he is repatriated. Additionally, his family is ready to supply support wherever this may be, although they would like him to return to Pakistan to be the head-of-household for both his wife and kids, who will rely on him.

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Saifullah has not expressed any ill will or anger about his detention at Guantanamo. He has denounced terrorist acts and organizations. Saifullah hopes today that you will find he is not a threat to the United States by answering your questions so that he can return home.

PM: Thank you. Private Counsel, you may proceed with your unclassified statement.

PC: Good morning. I am David Remes, Private Counsel for Saifullah Abdullah Paracha. Mr. Paracha is a citizen of Pakistan. At 86... at 68, he is the oldest remaining Guantanamo detainee. I've represented him since 2005 and speak frequently with his family in Pakistan and America.

Mr. Paracha respectfully asks that the Board recommend him for transfer. He wishes to be brought either to Pakistan or America. In Pakistan, he will reunite with his wife of 36 years, and their two daughters and large extended family, rebuild his businesses and build new ones, and live a normal peaceful life. In America, he and his wife will live normal lives among their large contingent of relatives here, to include one of his brothers, one of his sisters, his two sons, and 22 nieces and nephews.

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Wherever he goes, Mr. Paracha, who suffers from chronic medical conditions, will require medical observation and care.

Mr. Paracha is certainly well prepared for life in America or any other English-speaking country. He lived in the U.S. from 1970 to 1986 and married here. Born into extreme poverty in a remote Punjab village in 1947, he came to America when he was 24 and became a successful businessman. He owned travel agencies which facilitated travel between the U.S. and Pakistan, and he produced a weekly television program for the Pakistani population in New Jersey.

When Mr. Paracha returned to Pakistan in 1986, he and an American partner established an export-import business, which acted as a buying agency in Pakistan for American retail giants, such as Wal-Mart and K-Mart, placing orders for garments and other merchandise made in Pakistan. Mr. Paracha also set up a television production company, which produced plays and programs designed to promote religious harmony.

Mr. Paracha is fluent in English and avidly follows the news in the English-language news media. Mr. Paracha does not speak Arabic. He often beats me to the punch when we discuss political or economic developments here and abroad. Mr. Paracha also has faith that the United States can play a constructive role in world affairs. Among the items we submitted to the Board are pre-9/11 letters that he



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wrote to President George W. Bush and former President George H.W. Bush proposing ways to bridge the divide between the Western and Arab worlds.

Mr. Paracha is and always has been a model detainee. He has always been held in quarters reserved for the most compliant detainees. Remarkably, he has stayed cheerful and upbeat despite his unfortunate circumstances. Guards and camp officials enjoy his company, and he always talked freely and openly with his interrogators. Of course, Mr. Paracha cannot show remorse for things he maintains he never did.

Mr. Paracha has been an enormously positive influence on other detainees. Other detainees call him "Uncle," a term of great respect for male elders, and seek out his advice. Wise and understanding, he discourages conflict and calms detainees when they are agitated. He promotes harmony among religions. He taught classes in business administration and English. Once, when other facilities were unavailable, he set up class in a cell.

Mr. Paracha also counseled cooperation with the government in the judicial and administrative process. When the Supreme Court, in 2004, gave detainees the green light to pursue habeas corpus cases, Mr. Paracha urged his fellows to accept help from the American

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lawyers. When the Periodic Review Board opened for business in July 2013, he urged them to participate in the process.

Saifullah Paracha harbors no animosity to the U.S. On the contrary, he has many family members here and is willing to be resettled here. Once, when asked if he is half-Pakistani and half-American, he replied that he is entirely Pakistani and entirely American. Nor does Mr. Paracha have any sympathy for terrorism or radical Islam. On the contrary, he has publicly denounced terrorism as un-Islamic and will continue to speak against it.

Model detainee. Mentor to younger detainees. Counselor of tolerance, and understanding, and cooperation. Paterfamilias of a great extended family, with members in Pakistan and America. A man at home in the U.S. and at ease with Western culture and ways. A man who opposes and denounces violent extremism. This man, Saifullah Paracha, is no threat to the United States, and the Board should recommend him for transfer.

PM: Thank you. Board Members may reserve questions until the detainee and witness statements have been presented in their entirety. Does any member of the Board have a question for the Personal Representative or Counsel in this session?

[No verbal response from the members.]

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PM: With no questions, this concludes this portion of the hearing. I'd ask everybody to remain seated until further instructed by the Case Administrator.

CA: We will take a 15-minute recess to prepare for the remaining sessions.

[The public session closed at 0914, 08 March 2016.]

[END OF PAGE]

ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYM KEY

BM: BOARD MEMBER  
CA: CASE ADMINISTRATOR  
DET: DETAINEE  
PC: PRIVATE COUNSEL  
PM: PRESIDING MEMBER  
PR 1: PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE ONE  
PR 2: PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE TWO