

PERIODIC REVIEW BOARD SUBSEQUENT HEARING, 04 AUG 2015
Muhammed Abd Al Rahman Awn Al Shamrani, ISN 195
DETAINEE STATEMENT

Respected Members of the Review Board:

My name is Muhammad Abd-al Rahman Bin A'wan Al Shamrani. I was born on February 15th, 1970 (2/25/1390 H, Islamic Calendar) in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. I am a teacher by profession.

In my following statement, I will attempt to summarize my story to you in a straightforward and clear manner.

I travelled to Afghanistan in June of 2001, during the traditional time when school vacation takes place. I planned to be in Afghanistan for the duration of the school vacation period; approximately two to two and one-half months. I planned to go back to my family and my country following this time. However, these plans were interrupted by the events of September 11th, 2001. Shortly after the war broke out, all travel means were cut off. At that time, I was on the front lines with the Taliban in the Bagram area fighting against Northern Alliances forces led by Ahmad Shah Masood. I remained there until I withdrew to Pakistan. In Pakistan, we surrendered our weapons to the Pakistani Army and were given assurances that Pakistan would turn us over to the governments of our respective countries.

The Pakistani Army did not deliver on that promise however, and proceeded to hand us over to the United States Army. On New Years of 2002, I was moved to the detention center at Kandahar and stayed there as a detainee with US forces for two weeks. After this time, I was transferred to Guantanamo and began an era that has lasted for 13 and one-half years. No one knows when this time will end except God. I am held here without charges being brought against me, without fair trial and without basic rights which preserve human dignity.

This summarizes my story. I do not like to talk about it, because I have shared this story many times. I have been asked to repeat this same account again and again. I cannot go back in time and change the past. As the proverb states, "it does no good to cry over spilt milk." That does not mean that I ignore the lessons of the past or escape the consequences, but the past is over whether good or bad. We should not look to the past, only to the future. The Sun will rise again and hopefully there is a happy ending. Let us look to that future and hope that it is a better one.

My family circumstances have changed dramatically since I left home in 2001. Unfortunately for me, these changes were not for the good. I will share these circumstances with you.

My Father, God bless his soul, passed away about ten years ago. My family kept the news of his death a secret from me for about eight years. He was the breadwinner and sole means of support for the family. Now my youngest brother, who has little life experience, took over the responsibility of supporting the family. This responsibility should be mine to bear.

My mother became elderly and ill. She [REDACTED] is urgently in need of care. It is my responsibility to take care of her in her remaining years. Caring for my Mother is an honor and I will gladly do this honorable task. In the tradition of Islam, devotion to your parents has the most merit within the eyes of God. God states that if the parents are pleased with their children, He will be pleased. This is known by every Muslim.

The only positive thing which has happened in my absence is that my family moved to a larger house. I told my family that after I am transferred and able to return home I will live with them in the same house. When I marry, I will still reside there with my wife. As a matter of fact, living with my family will be the first condition that my wife will have to agree to because I will not leave my Mother's side from now on since she is in urgent need of care.

As the Board is aware, I declined to participate in my previous PRB. One of the main reasons I decided to heed the Board's advice and participate in this subsequent review was to honor the wishes of my Mother, who also urged me to participate.

I also heeded the Board's advice [REDACTED] I expressed to the Saudi delegation that I am eager to attend the Muhammad Bin Nayef Center for Counselling and Care. Additionally, I requested all available information on the rehabilitation center from the delegation, my Private Counsel and my Personal Representative so that I could prepare myself now to the best of my ability.

I believe that attending the rehabilitation center will be a positive and beneficial experience for me. The way I look at life is that everyone makes mistakes, so a person should reflect on whether their actions have been good or bad. Who would be better to help me with this reflection than the foremost religious scholars of my country who teach at the rehabilitation center. I trust the views and opinions of these religious scholars more than any others. I have the greatest respect for their advice since they are older, more knowledgeable, have more experience and know the teachings of Islam better than anyone.

In my opinion the rehabilitation center, where I will be taught and guided by the best religious scholars, is the best place for me. This will benefit me much more than if I was just released and sent home.

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Although I have studied Islamic philosophy, I need the scholarly teachings from those who have fifty or sixty years of experience. I need them to point out areas where I have strayed and to guide me on the right path. This is very important to me.

Today, my focus is on my future. This subject is constantly on my mind. My dream is to go back to school to continue my education. I also dream of marrying and having a family of my own. With the help of the Saudi Government and the rehabilitation program, these dreams may be possible for me to achieve.

However, my priority remains to take over the responsibility of caring for my Mother and compensating her for the pain and sorrow I have caused her. To this end, I have a plan to open a laundromat near my home. Such a business would allow me to support her and my other family members. According to my limited information, this project needs only the modest capital investment to purchase the equipment and a lease of a suitable site. The rest of the necessities are few and inexpensive. I can improve upon this basic plan with more research and study.

Finally, I wish to say that it is my sincere wish to live a peaceful life with no strife or conflict, in a safe place, in good health, close to my Mother, brothers, family members, neighbors and my tribe.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you and speak today.

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