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CA: This Periodic Review Board is being conducted at 0907 [sic] hours on 6 December 2016, with regard to the following detainee: Mohammed al-Ansi.

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.

TRANS 1: [TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

CA: 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,
THE OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF
STAFF.

The following personnel are also present:

LEGAL ADVISOR TO THE BOARD;
CASE ADMINISTRATORS;
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE;
PRIVATE COUNSEL;
TWO TRANSLATORS;

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THE DETAINEE; AND,
THE SECURITY OFFICER.

TRANS 1: [TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

CA: The detainee's Personal Representative, Private Counsel, the detainee, and one translator are located at the detention facility, U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. They are attending via video teleconference and the detainee waived translation of the unclassified summary, and Personal Representative's, and Private Counsel's opening statements. These documents have been posted to the Periodic Review Secretariat website. This session is being observed by national and local media; foreign government officials; representatives from non-government associations [sic]... organizations.

TRANS 1: [TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

PM: Good morning. This Board is convened to determine whether continued law of war detention is warranted for Mohammed al-Ansi, ISN 029, to protect against a continuing significant threat to the security of the United States. From here forward, we'll refer to the detainee as Mohammed. This session of the hearing is unclassified.

TRANS 1: [TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

PM: Mohammed, this is your Periodic Review Board to determine whether continued law of war detention is warranted in

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your case. Continued law of war detention will be warranted if it's necessary to protect against a continuing significant threat to the national security of the United States. The focus of this hearing is on the threat you may pose to the United States and its interests, if transferred or released from U.S. custody. It is not on the lawfulness of your detention.

TRANS 1: [TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

PM: The Personal Representative and Private Counsel are your representatives to assist you during this process. Finally, the translators ensure that everybody understands your statements and that you understand what is being said during this hearing.

TRANS 1: [TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

PM: Personal Representative, Private Counsel, has Mohammed had an opportunity to review the unclassified summary?

TRANS 1: [TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

PR: Yes, Ma'am.

PC: Yes, Ma'am.

TRANS 2: [TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

PM: Thank you. I'll read the unclassified summary:

Mohammed al-Ansi, ISN 029, traveled to Afghanistan in 1999, where he joined al-Qaeda, swore bayat to Usama bin Laden, and served as bin Laden's bodyguard. Judging from other

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detainee statements and corroborating information, Mohammed may have been selected to participate in an aborted hijacking plot in Asia intended to coincide with the 9/11 attacks. He was captured by Pakistani authorities after the battle of Tora Bora in 2001. Mohammed has been mostly compliant with the detention staff at Guantanamo, and his last disciplinary infraction was in June 2014. Since April 2016, he has indicated he no longer supports extremism, and that he desires to live in peace. While he may be trying to influence the U.S. government, he may well have had a change in mindset. Mohammed has not maintained contact with terrorists at large.

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

TRANS 1: [TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

PR: Yes, Ma'am.

PC: Yes, Ma'am.

TRANS 2: [TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

PM: All right. I'd like to remind everyone that information shared at this time must be unclassified. If there's a concern about classification of the information, I will indicate such and stop the proceedings until we resolve the issue. Has Mohammed had the opportunity to review your statements?

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TRANS 1: [TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

PR: Yes, Ma'am.

PC: Yes, Ma'am.

TRANS 2: [TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

PM: All right. Personal Representative, please proceed.

TRANS 1: [TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

PR: Members of the Board, I am the Personal Representative for Mohammed al-Ansi. I will be assisting Mr. al-Ansi at... this morning aided by his counsel, Ms. Beth Jacob.

From the beginning, Mr. al-Ansi has intensely participated in the PRB process. He was very encouraged upon receiving the news of his full Board... full re... Full Review hearing. From his initial PRB hearing until now, he has maintained a record of perfect attendance for meetings with his Personal Representative and Private Counsel despite the constant change in scheduling. His professional manner throughout all engagements with his PC and PR has not wavered.

He continues to enthusiastically maintain his compliant behavior with the Joint Task Force guard force and continues to engage with the Joint Task Force medical staff in order to deal with chronic health issues. In addition, Mr. al-Ansi has not ceased for... passionately take advantage of the educational opportunities to include courses in Mathematics, Science,

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English, Spanish, Life Skills, Computers, Art, and recently started the Arab-British Academy for higher education studies. Since July of 2016, he has created an additional 150 quality works of art. Seven additional works of art are included in his... his case submission. Recently, he has enrolled in Small Project Management, Business Administration, Accounting, and Ledgers classes.

Mr. al-Ansi sincerely welcomes the opportunity to share his complete story at the Full Review hearing today. A full... a full PRB provides Mr. al-Ansi the prospect to answer any questions the Board may have regarding his time in Afghanistan or any other questions with regards to him being a significant continuing threat to U.S. national security. Mr. al-Ansi will demonstrate to the Board that he is willing to do whatever is necessary to leave Guantanamo and live out his life in peace.

Thank you for your time and attention. I am pleased to answer any questions you may have throughout this proceeding.

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

TRANS 1: [BEGINS TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

PC: ... Good morning...

TRANS 1: [FINISHES TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

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PC: Sorry. Good morning. My name is Beth Jacob and I am Private Counsel for Mohammed al-Ansi.

I'm a partner with Kelley Drye & Warren, a national law firm, where I represent generic pharmaceutical companies. Before joining Kelley Drye & Warren, I represented the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey in litigation arising out of the attacks of September 11, 2001, and represented victims of those attacks in obtaining compensation. Earlier in my career, I was an assistant district attorney in New York City, prosecuting fraud and official corruption.

I have represented Mr. al-Ansi since shortly after the Board's decision on the initial review. I was not his lawyer at the time of the previous Board hearing. I have met and spoken with Mr. al-Ansi numerous times in the past year, and also read some of his earlier letters and the files of his case. He has been open with and respectful of me in all of our interactions.

At our first meeting, Mr. al-Ansi paid me the compliment of bringing a selection of his paintings where he has learned art through classes at Guantanamo. We spent the first hour discussing his artwork. After several meetings, he trusted me with his originals, and I showed them to an artist who lives and works in New York City. She was struck by his ability and innate talent, as she has written in her letter to this Board.

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Both this artist and Reprieve pointed out that Mr. al-Ansi's art will stand him in good stead if he is deemed transferrable. First, it will give him something to do and a means of expression in the first days and weeks after his transfer. Second, he will be part of the community of artists, which will provide stability and social contacts. Third, there is a possibility of earnings from his art. But Mr. al-Ansi is planning for more practical ways to make a living. He told me he would like a construction job, and among the many classes that he is taking here at GTMO is one about small business.

Two other major factors are important for evaluating the man Mr. al-Ansi is now. One is his family. He is one of five children. Mohammed now is 36 years old. He was a teenager when he left home, and was barely 20 when he arrived at Guantanamo.

Mohammed's siblings are educated, married, and hold responsible jobs. Although they grew up in Saudi Arabia, the family now lives in Yemen. But despite the unsettled conditions in Yemen, the al-Ansi family still has resources which they are completely willing to use to help their brother start a new life after Guantanamo, as shown by the statements the family submitted to the first Board and this panel. His family will be a stabilizing force when he is transferred.

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The second factor is his health. He knows that managing these chronic conditions takes much time, effort, and attention, and that he must follow a strict diet and exercise regimen, in addition to his medications.

If he is released, Mr. al-Ansi will have support from more than his family. The Carter Center, founded by President Carter, agreed to assist in his resettlement before the last hearing; and in conversations and emails with counsel, they have renewed their agreement to help Mr. al-Ansi settle successfully into a new country. In addition, Reprieve has agreed to work with Mr. al-Ansi through its successful "Life After Guantanamo" project, which has helped over three dozen former detainees - many of them Yemenis - make the adjustment from Guantanamo to life in society. And, of course, I stand ready to assist using my firm's network of contacts and resources if necessary.

Mr. al-Ansi comes before you as someone who has matured during his time in Guantanamo, from a teenager to a man who devotes his free time to art, understands the importance of family, and is confronted with serious medical challenges. He has taken advantage of his years here in taking numerous classes, including learning English. He has been unfailingly polite and gentle in all of his conversations with me, and non-ideological. He is known to the guards as someone who will help

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mediate disputes - a peacemaker, not a troublemaker. I ask this Board to approve him for transfer. Thank you.

PM: Thank you. Board Members may reserve questions until detainee and witness statements have been presented in their entirety. Does anyone have a question at this time?

(NON-VERBAL RESPONSE FROM BMS)

TRANS 1: [TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

PM: All right. With no questions, this concludes this portion of the hearing, and I ask that we all remain seated until further instructed by our Case Administrator.

TRANS 1: [TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

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

TRANS 1: [TRANSLATION OF ABOVE]

[The public session closed at 0921, 6 December 2016.]

[END OF PAGE]

ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYM KEY

BM: BOARD MEMBER

CA: CASE ADMINISTRATOR

DET: DETAINEE

PC: PRIVATE COUNSEL

PM: PRESIDING MEMBER

PR: PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

TRANS 1: TRANSLATOR ONE (LOCATED AT PRS HQ)

TRANS 2: TRANSLATOR TWO (LOCATED AT GUANTANAMO BAY)