

**Statement of Mahmoud Abdalaziz Al Mujahid, ISN 31**

**Periodic Review Board  
November 20, 2013**

My name is Mahmoud Abdalaziz Al Mujahid, ISN 31. I am from Taiz, Yemen. I am 33 years old. I appeal to the Board to approve me for transfer to Yemen or another country.

If I am returned to Yemen, I will have the support of a large and distinguished family of judges, lawyers, and journalists. If I am sent elsewhere, I will have my own drive to succeed and the support of such human rights groups as Amnesty International, which assist former Guantánamo detainees wherever they are sent. Wherever I am sent, I will seize every opportunity for self-improvement. I am determined to be, and will be, a law-abiding and productive member of society.

I am relying on my brother Muhammed to provide the Board with basic information about my family and the support it will give me if I return to Yemen. I am relying on Amat Ali Salim Alsoswa, the former Yemen diplomat and first Minister of Human Rights, to inform the Board of my family's high standing.

I will recount aspects of my life as a detainee here, which I hope the Board will consider to be a strong indication of the constructive life I will lead after I am released.

First and foremost, I have been compliant and cooperative. I am committed to obey the law. Since 2011, I have been in Camp 6, [REDACTED], which houses detainees who give Camp authorities the utmost cooperation. We do not refuse or resist orders. Before being moved to Camp 6, [REDACTED], I lived in Camp 6, [REDACTED]. The men of the block elected me block leader twice—in 2009 and 2010. They value my ability to defuse conflicts among detainees and between detainees and Camp authorities.



Camp authorities have praised me for my composure in tense situations. They know that I will always keep my cool. When I see a problem brewing in the Block, I meet with the authorities and suggest solutions before the problem gets out of hand. Camp authorities look to me to disseminate to my brothers changes in SOPs.

I also handle smaller, everyday problems. For example, if a brother in the rec yard refuses to return to his block, I will coax him to return. If two brothers are having a heated exchange, I intervene and make peace. I try to put disputes in perspective for my brothers. I let them vent at me when they are hot under the collar. I am flexible and open-minded in my approach. I do not prejudge situations but try to see all sides and understand the perspective of others.

In addition to serving as a leader and conciliator, I have made every effort to advance my education, not only for the pleasure of learning, but to prepare myself for life after I am released. I have taken computer classes, life skills classes, and English classes. I came here knowing no English. Now I can speak and understand basic English. In addition to classwork, I took individual instruction from Saifullah Paracha (ISN 1094), an English-speaking Pakistani who spent 16 years in the U.S. (1970–1986). Mr. Paracha has taught me English, science, business, and other subjects. He has submitted a statement to the Board attesting to my thirst for learning, my commitment to my education, and my growth as a student. Wherever I am sent, I will continue to advance my education.

When I am released, I will look for work. Two former detainees from Taiz who went home in 2009 and 2010—Faruq Ali Ahmed (ISN 32) and Mohammed Hassen Mohammed Al Odaini (ISN 681), respectively—work in a shop in downtown Taiz selling honey, spices, and perfumes. Of course, I will want to get married and start a family while I can still perform my responsibilities as a husband and father. Most of all, I want to catch up with life.



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PERIODIC REVIEW BOARD, NOVEMBER 20, 2013  
MAHMOUD ABDALAZIZ AL MUJAHID, ISN 31

STATEMENT OF SAIFULLAH PARACHA, ISN 1094<sup>1</sup>

The Presiding Officer  
Periodic Review Board  
U.S. Naval Station  
Guantanamo Bay, Cuba

October, 22 2013

Reference: Detainee Mahmoud Abdal Aziz Al Mujahid, ISN 031

Subject: Educational & Professional Assessment

Honorable Madams/Sirs:

I had a meeting with my attorney Mr. David Remes and the Personal Representatives of my fellow detainee Mr. Mahmoud Abdal Aziz Al-Mujahid on Oct. 22, 2013. It was an honor and privilege to assist and teach my fellow detainees in reading, writing, speaking English, mathematics, and business administration. Mr. Al-Mujahid was also my student. The JTF administration was very appreciative and encouraged me and assisted us in every possible way. My attorney and above-referenced detainee's Personal Representatives asked for this report.

I would like to introduce myself with a brief background. My name is Saifullah A. Paracha—ISN 1094. I was born in Pakistan on August 17, 1947. I was educated at Government High School, Drigh Colony, Karachi, Pakistan (1964); Aisha Bawany College, Karachi (1964-1966); University of Karachi (B.S.) (1966-1969); and New York Institute of Technology (System Design) (1971-1973). I ran several businesses. I was Chairman and Chief Executive Officer and a shareholder of Globe Travel Service, Rockefeller Plaza, New York; Sana Travel, Inc., 507 Fifth Avenue, New York; Third World Broadcasting, WNJU, New York; I.M.G. New

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<sup>1</sup> This is a typed version of Mr. Paracha's handwritten original, which is also provided. It corrects small mistakes in the original, e.g., typos and dropped words, and in a few instances clarifies the original.

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York and Karachi, Pakistan; Universal Broadcasting-Pakistan; Abson Industries Ltd., a publicly traded company; and Cliftonia, Realtor, Karachi, Pakistan.

I used to live in New York at 83-09 Midland Pkwy, Jamaica Estates, NY 11432 from 1971 to 1986 and used to visit New York frequently [after I returned to Pakistan]. I was captured in Bangkok, Thailand [REDACTED] I was transferred to Afghanistan and then to Guantánamo in the third week of September 2004.

As I remember, since 2005 my fellow inmates in Camps 4, 5, and 6 and now in Camp [REDACTED] wanted me to teach them English and Urdu. I can read the Holy Qu'ran in Arabic, but I cannot talk in Arabic at all, or understand Arabic. Most detainees here were Arabs and some Afghans. Afghans speak Pashto, Farsi, and Urdu.

Since September 2004, I was shifted from time to time to various camps in Guantánamo and within camps to different cellblocks for reasons best known to the administration. In December 2010, I was shifted to [REDACTED] Camp 6. Mahmoud was also in Camp 6 but in a different block. At that time I did not know Mahmoud but he knew about me, I was an elderly Pakistani who was teaching English. He managed to transfer from another block in Camp 6 to my Block [REDACTED] within Camp 6.

When Mahmoud joined me, I was already teaching some inmates English and business concepts. He, in the most humble way, requested me to teach him independently. I saw in him [a desire] to learn English and how to start a business. He was very keen, sincere, and excited but had no concept of being punctual and disciplined, like all other inmates. Almost all inmates were prejudiced [against] English. I tried very hard to [convert] them by giving examples of the language on the Internet, international business, and the internationally understood language and means of communication.

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Mahmoud was quick to realize the importance of language (English) and I started teaching as much time as he needed my time. He was lacking punctuality and discipline. I used to suspend his class for a few days, and he realized quickly to do his homework properly and attend classes on time. I taught him how to read, write and converse in English. I tried my level best to teach him how to start a business. We were then shifted to Camp 5 [REDACTED] together in March 2012. In September I was shifted alone to Camp 6, [REDACTED]

In Camp 6, [REDACTED] we had 24 hours open access. There were about 35 inmates. We converted cell [REDACTED] into a classroom with desks and chairs. There I had many students. Some of them were very angry and rebellious. I kept them busy with extra homework. The camp OIC personally visited me and said he appreciated the changes in the detainees.

I helped five of my fellow inmates [REDACTED] to prepare a feasibility report of a project in Yemen ["Yemen Milk & Honey Farm Limited"]. Their ISN numbers were 1463, 235, 441, 037, 242. The administration was extremely cooperative. I am enclosing a copy for your information through Mr. Remes my attorney.<sup>[2]</sup>

On April 12, 2013, I was shifted back to Camp V and in the same Block [REDACTED] where Mahmoud was residing. I gave him details of the feasibility report, "Yemen Milk & Honey Farm Limited" and I advised him whenever he goes back to Yemen, he should join this business organization.

Mahmoud has an extraordinary ability to recite the Holy Qur'an. When he recites it, it's like Divine music. I requested him to teach me to recite the Holy Qur'an properly, and I used to have daily reciting sessions. He also had been my teacher.

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<sup>[2]</sup> The feasibility report is a 75-page hand-written prospectus for a "self-sustained and self-sustaining" agricultural enterprise, to be operated by former Yemeni detainees. JTF approved it for public release.

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Mahmoud claims and acknowledges that my teaching and interaction with him has completely changed his life. I only gave him theoretical knowledge. My feeling is he is a very intelligent person and I helped him to restore his confidence. I do hope and pray for him to be a successful businessman, kind family man, and a bona fide citizen.

I do hope this report will serve the purpose as required by Mahmoud and his personal representatives.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

ISN 1094

cc: Mr. David Remes  
Attorney at Law

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PERIODIC REVIEW BOARD, NOVEMBER 20, 2013  
MAHMOUD ABDALAZIZ AL MUJAHID, ISN 31

**STATEMENT OF AMAT AL ALIM AL-SOSWA**

My name is Amat Al Alim Al-Soswa. I am a former Yemeni diplomat, cabinet minister, and senior United Nations official. I live in Sana'a, the capital of Yemen. I can testify to the character of Mr. Mujahid's family.

I grew up in Mr. Mujahid's city, Taiz, during sixties and seventies. I went to school in the first girls' school in the city, when there were no girls schools anywhere else in the country, including Sana'a. Unlike in other areas in Yemen back then, education in Taiz was a given. Women in Taiz enjoyed more freedom than women in the rest of the country. I say this to emphasize the enlightened nature of Mr. Mujahid's home city.

Between 2000 and 2003, I served as Yemen's ambassador to Sweden and Denmark, and the Netherlands where I was Yemen's Permanent Representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. In May 2003, I was appointed Minister of Human Rights, a new ministry. In 2005, I was appointed by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan as Assistant Secretary-General, Assistant Administrator of the United Nations Development Program and Director of its Regional Bureau for Arab States, a position that I held until mid-2012 I am a Trustee of the Arab Democracy Foundation.

Mr. Mujahid comes from a family of distinguished and respected judges. He grew up in Al-Ashrafiah in Taiz, the home of Al-Modhafar Mosque. Both are the well-known symbols of the Rasulid State that ruled of Yemen during 1229 to 1454. This was a golden period of history for Yemen where trade, agriculture, medicine, education and arts flourished, and one strong state ruled over the whole country. Today, Taiz continues to be cherished by Yemenis as the governorate where most educated, tolerant, and enlightened Yemenis come from.

Statement of Amat Al Alim Alsoswa, PRB Hearing for ISN 31 1



The area in Taiz where Mr. Mujahid grew up (Al-Ashrafiah in ban Musa) is known for its historically diverse yet tolerant communities. Muslims and Jews, Zaidi and Shafiees, live in peace with each other. Mr. Mujahid's family, who are open-minded and moderate Muslims, carry these values and believe in them. I know Mr. Mujahid's grandfather and I know his cousins, who have given Yemen some of the most enlightened judges, engineers, teachers, writers, historians, and journalists including his cousin Mohammed Al-Mujahid, who headed the Aljomhooryah newspaper for over 10 years.

I am confident that Mr. Mujahid's family will be a strong source of support for him when he returns to Yemen. I urge the Board to approve Mr. Mujahid for transfer.



**INTERVIEW WITH PRB WITNESS AMAT AL ALIM ALSOSWA**

*Interview with witness Amat Alsoswa by the lawyer David Remes on November 10, 2013. The interview was conducted through Skype.*

REMES: First of all, please state your name.

AMAT:: My name is Amat Al Alim Alsoswa.

REMES: I'm conducting this interview to record your remarks about the family of Mahmoud Abdal Aziz Al Mujahid, who is the subject of a hearing before the Periodic Review Board. Do you consent to this recording?

AMAT: I do consent to this recording.

REMES: Please start by describing your professional biography.

AMAT: I am currently living in Yemen, in Sana'a, which is the capital of the country. I now participate in the current national dialogue process. Hopefully that will end soon, and we will start a new era. I was before that working at the United Nations as the Assistant Secretary-General, and as Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States at the U.N. Development Program from 2006 until 2012. Before that, I was working as the Minister of Human Rights in my country, and before that I held the position of my country's Ambassador to Sweden, Denmark, and the Netherlands. At the same time, I was also my country's Permanent Representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons between 2000 and 2003.

This is a brief summary, but I am professionally a journalist, and also an activist. I work for women's rights, and for human rights in general. I started working at an early age at my country's first local radio station.



REMES: Well now I can move on to the crux of this, which is to ask you what you know about the Al Mujahid family, what your impressions are, and how you would say they're perceived in Yemen society.

AMAT: The Al Mujahid family is originally the ancestors of the first Mujahid family which established the Rashulite dynasty that ruled Yemen for more than 4 centuries. And most of the family members were all statesmen, they were well-known judges, from the establishment of Rashulite state and continued to be one of the well-known families in the entirety of Yemen and in particular in my city Taiz, where the family continues to reside.

It is perhaps maybe important for me to give you a quick overview about this particular city, also where the family of Al Mujahid lives. It used to be the most tolerant, erudite city of the Arab republic of Yemen. Al-Ashrafiah is the name of neighborhood in Taiz where the Al Mujahid family used to reside and continues to reside until today. It is located close to the most holy mosque of that city, called the Al-Modhafar Mosque. But the city itself also was old, and it is important to know the kind of life that this city has experienced, including a tolerant way of living together as Moslems, as Jews, as Zaidi, as Shafiees, and what have you. They live really from house to house, side by side. At certain times they also had marriages, intermarriages even between different faiths. It is very important for me as well to give you a sense of the kind of life and the kind of atmosphere this family continues to cherish and to respect.

If we are going to really jump from that particular old century of life in Yemen, it is with no exaggeration that I can tell you the Al Mujahid family continues to



leave its very good and positive influence in the whole cultural and political life of Yemen until this day. Amongst these well-known men comes Abdul Waleed, who is the immediate grandfather of Mahmoud. Abdul Waleed used to be referred to as the most just of all judges in the entire of Yemen, and actually his reputation has gone beyond the borders of Yemen to other countries. Many of his uncles, meaning many of Mahmoud's uncles and cousins, also are engaged in cultural lives. They are historians, they are journalists, and one of his cousins worked as the chief editor of the well-known newspaper called "The Republic" and continues to engage in the vibrant cultural life of this city. And by this, I just wanted to give you a very small picture of the family's life and also the kind of atmosphere around it.

As you know, in the country where I come from, the family is the essential fabric of a person, of a society, and no matter how far we are from home, we are all bound by the traditions and rules of our families. And I wanted as well to say that if you refer to the name of the Al Mujahid family in any part of Yemen, you will only hear words of admiration and references to the best judges of the entire country for centuries.

REMES: How did you hear of the Al Mujahid family? When did you hear of them?

AMAT: Well, it was a long, long time ago. As you know, I grew up in Taiz city and as I told you, I was working from an early age as a young journalist. My family, as well, used to live very close to their neighborhood, which is the Al-Ashrafiah area. Not exactly in the same neighborhood, but my parents also lived in Taiz city, and they had very good connections to the Al Mujahid family in the 1960s



and 1970s, and perhaps also into the early 1980s, when we moved to Sana'a. We still have very good family connections. The women of my family and also the men of my family and those of Al Mujahid family continue to connect with each other, especially my father who is himself a judge. I remember very clearly my father's references to Qadhi Al Mujahid in particular and his son Abdalkarim Al Mujahid, who is the immediate cousin of Mahmoud. This is the way in which we knew them, but also many of the Al Mujahid worked even for me or with me as colleagues in the radio station and also in the media department both in Taiz and in Sana'a.

REMES: Can you characterize the character and reputation of the family? Because it will be important for the Board to assess the stability of life that Mahmoud will have when he's released and his prospects for becoming a constructive member of society.

AMAT: It goes without saying, you know, for a family of such caliber and with such a reputation -- a reputation in the social sphere and also in the private sphere. People really go to this particular family, not only on matters related to the law or the implementation of law, because most of them were really the most respectable judges, but also for the quality of the social relations this family has with so many in Yemen. And as you know, it is a very small community in the Al-Ashrafiah area of Taiz, especially in Bab Mousa. And Bab Mousa, in particular, witnessed this kind of a very tolerant, relationship between different faiths, different social classes, that continues to be. Even today, if you go to the old city of Taiz, known as Al Medina, and you ask, for example, even as a guest passing through who



wants just to rest, you will receive hospitality. I'm not saying that the Al Mujahid family is the wealthiest family in terms of the material world, but their reputation for generosity keeps them really at the very first line, if you will, when it comes to taking care even of strangers, let alone taking care of their own sons or daughters. And I am saying this to give you also an example about the kind of feeling that this family really holds for its son and their real, serious desire to welcome him back, to help him to rejoin his life and the life that he will continue in his own city and also within his own family.

I know they are all looking forward to welcoming him back, to giving him the chance for the continuation of his life. And I am sure that you realize a person like Mahmoud -- with the quality he has -- will be ready as well to go back to school and to continue to achieve his hope and dream of being a teacher. And a teacher to those who he himself taught at a very early age. Because I know from his family that even before he concluded his high school, he was already teaching the kids, the young boys and girls of his neighborhood. He was teaching them in the afternoons because he loved so much to teach and to become also a valuable and reasonable member of the community and of the family.

REMES: Would you advise the Periodic Review Board to approve Mahmoud for transfer to Yemen?

AMAT: I think if there is any family which is capable to welcome its son back, in this place, in this country, in this city, it would be Mahmoud's family -- the Al Mujahid family. They are very responsible not only to immediate members of their families. You have seen that they continue to carry this reputation of being



not only very generous but also warm. As I said, they are in waiting, really, to have Mahmoud back, and I am quite confident that he will find the place and the people, most importantly, who will take care of him and who will also help him to rejoin his ordinary life.



**INTERVIEW WITH PRB WITNESS MOHAMMAD AL-MUJAHID**

*Interview with witness Mohammad Abdul Aziz Abdul Waleed Bin Mohammad Al-Mujahid, brother of GTMO detainee Mahmoud Al-Mujahid (ISN 31), by the lawyer David Remes on November 8, 2013. The interview was conducted through Skype.*

Remes: Good morning Mohammad.

Mohammad: Welcome.

Remes: We have asked you to come to talk about Mahmoud and the family. We are going to submit this interview to the Periodic Review Board, for its hearing on Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> for Mahmoud's case. Do you consent to this interview?

Mohammad: Yes, I do.

Remes: Could you please state your full name?

Mohammad: Mohammad Abdul Aziz Abdul Waleed Bin Mohammad Al-Mujahid.

Remes: You are Mahmoud's brother?

Mohammad: Yes, his half-brother; I am his brother from his father and his mother.

Remes: Please tell us a couple of your favorite stories about Mahmoud.

Mohammad: Mahmoud's nature is humorous. In the mosque, all the students liked to gather around him. He is loved by his friends, the students, all those who are around him. Mahmoud is not a hostile person.

Remes: Excuse me, when you refer to students, you mean other students?

Mohammad: Students with him who were young kids.

Remes: What was he like within the family?

Mohammad: Within his family, Mahmoud is the eleventh in sequence; he is the last one.

Remes: The baby of the family.



Mohammad: Yes, that is correct. His father, when he died, Mahmoud was around two months old; it was around 1981.

Remes: Okay, let us talk about your father first, what was his occupation?

Mohammad: He was a court clerk.

Remes: What was his responsibility?

Mohammad: To make sure that the work is being done according to the law.

Remes: Tell us about your grandfather, the Judge.

Mohammad: The Judge Abdul Waleed. He was the ruler or judge on an overall basis for the Taz region.

Remes: The Taz region is the largest in population -- is that correct, do you know?

Mohammad: In regard to population, Taz is big, but in regard to area, it comes after the capital Sana'a.

Remes: What did Judge Abdul Waleed do that was most notable?

Mohammad: He would resolve disputes between opposing parties.

Remes: Now let us talk a little bit about the brothers. Can you just name them for us and tell us what they do?

Mohammad: Ahmad, the oldest; the first one is Ahmad -- Ahmad Abdul Aziz.

Interpreter: Can you please repeat the name again?

Mohammad: Ahmad Abdul Aziz Abdul Waleed Al-Mujahid. His job is General Manager of Teaching Methods at the Directorate of Education and Training at Taz.

Interpreter: The next one?

Mohammad: Aida, who is a housewife.

Next is Omar, Stores Manager at a company that stores detergents and soap.

Next is Jalal, a lawyer.



Next is Awra, a housewife.

Sixth is me, Mohammad; I am a manager at Al-Jamhuriya newspaper.

Remes: Is that a newspaper?

Mohammad: Yes, a government newspaper.

Remes: Can you give us its full name?

Mohammad: The Al-Jamhuriya Organization for Printing and Publishing.

Remes: Please keep going.

Mohammad: Riyadh.

Remes: Does he live around town?

Mohammad: He lives in the same neighborhood, in his home.

Remes: What are his daily activities?

Mohammad: Riyadh currently is working as a legal representative for the estate for the family home of Al-Mujahid, the elder grandfather.

Next is Ma'an.

Interpreter: What is his job?

Mohammad: He is the head of the Water and Health Department at Ibb, in the province of Ibb.

Interpreter: Ninth?

Mohammad: Fatima, who is a housewife.

Next is Abdullah, who is unemployed.

Mahmoud is the last one.

Remes: Good; have any members of your family served in the military?



Mohammad: Yes.

Remes: Has anyone been involved in the security forces?

Mohammad: In Yemen, after high school, there is compulsory military service; that is, after completing high school.

The siblings who have completed this military service are: Ahmad, Jalal, Mohammad, Riyadh, and Ma'an.

Remes: Now, I would like to move into the area of life of Mahmoud when he is released. I would like to ask you now questions about what kind of life lies before Mahmoud when he is released. Do you expect that Mahmoud will live in Taz?

Mohammad: Yes.

Remes: Can you tell me where he will be able to live if he comes back?

Mohammad: In his father's house -- in my father's home; it is a big house. If he returns, God willing, he will be given a room in the house. We will find a wife for him. He can live there in the house in privacy; it is quite empty.

Remes: Who lives in the house?

Mohammad: Jalal and Abdullah. Jalal is married; Abdullah is single. The house is big.

Remes: Does Jalal have children?

Mohammad: Jalal has three young ones.

Remes: Will Mahmoud's basic needs be met -- food, you mentioned shelter, clothing, and the like?

Mohammad: Regarding the necessities of life, like food, etc., he could come to my place and have lunch; another day, he might not come. That is Mahmoud's nature; he has self pride.

Remes: That is good. Will the family approve and encourage his goal of completing his education and pursuing a profession?

Mohammad: God willing, yes. I have saved his educational file since his graduation from high school. If he returns, I will take this file and apply to the nearest university in a field where he wants to specialize.



Remes: Finally, I like to ask a general question, will Mahmoud be welcomed home not by just the family but more broadly?

Mohammad: As I said, Mahmoud is loved by all those who are around him, his uncles, his friends. During the communication that we have with him through the internet at GTMO, there are a lot of people who want to talk to him, but they are not allowed to do that because only family can talk to him. A lot of other people eagerly want to talk to him.

Remes: Mohammad, these are the questions that I have now. We are very grateful to you for being able to provide with these answers to our questions. I can only say thank you, and I know that this will be helpful to your brother.

Mohammad: Mr. David, I am ready to offer any assurance or anything that I am able to offer.

Remes: That is reassuring. Peace be upon you Mohammad.

Mohammad: Peace be upon you.