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

**OPENING STATEMENT OF
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE MAJOR [REDACTED]**

Good morning ladies and gentlemen of the board, I'm Major [REDACTED]. Lt Col [REDACTED] and I are the Personal Representatives (PRs) for Mr. Mahmud Al-Mujahid, and will be happy to answer any questions that you have throughout this proceeding.

As the advocates for Mr. Al-Mujahid, and through our collaboration with Mr. David Remes, the Private Counsel for this case, we have strived to provide you the information that will demonstrate that Mahmud poses no significant threat to the security of the United States. Throughout the process, we as PRs have been thoroughly impressed with Mahmud's professionalism, candor, and willingness to actively participate in these proceedings. I believe that after careful review of the documents we've provided, and after you've had the chance to hear Mahmud's comments to the Board, you will share that opinion, and recommend that he be transferred from detention. At this time I would like to introduce Mr. David Remes, for his opening statement. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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**OPENING STATEMENT OF
PRIVATE COUNSEL DAVID H. REMES**

Good morning. I'm David Remes, private counsel for Mr. Al-Mujahid. Covington & Burling is my co-counsel.

This is not a difficult case. Mr. Mujahid is a model detainee. He is cooperative and compliant. He does not refuse or resist orders. Since 2011, he has been housed in a cellblock for the utmost cooperative and compliant detainees.

Mr. Mujahid is a natural leader. His blockmates value his judgments and trust him to represent their interests with camp authorities. In the cellblock where he was housed in 2009–2010, his blockmates twice elected him their leader.

Mr. Mujahid is a peacemaker. He mediates conflicts between detainees, and between detainees and camp authorities. When his fellow detainees resist orders, he coaxes them to obey. He alerts authorities to simmering problems and helps keep the problems from coming to a boil.

These strong personal qualities came to the fore after communal living was extended to the vast majority of detainees. That transformation occurred during 2009. The Board thus has before it new information presumably not available to the Guantánamo Review Task Force.

Mr. Mujahid has also seized every opportunity to advance his education and prepare for life after prison. He has taken classes in life skills, computers, business, and English. In 2010, Mr. Mujahid began taking individual instruction from Saifullah Paracha, an English-speaking detainee. Mr. Paracha has submitted a statement attesting to Mr. Mujahid's eagerness to learn and his commitment to self-improvement.

Mr. Mujahid's family will fully embrace and support him on his return. As the statement of his brother Muhammed makes clear, Mr. Mujahid's family will house him and, although the

family is not wealthy, will provide for his basic needs while he looks for work—he ultimately hopes to find a profession—and seeks to start a family. They will enable him to lead a stable and productive life when he returns. Mr. Mujahid will also have the support of such human rights groups as Amnesty International, which assist former detainees. We have also submitted an interview with Muhammed that I conducted on November 8, 2013.

Ms. Amat Al Alim Alsoswa, a former Yemen diplomat and Yemen's first human rights minister, will speak to the Board today from the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a, certifying the family's distinguished history and high standing in Yemen society. We have given the Board her statement and an interview with her that I conducted on November 10, 2013.

If the experience of two of my former Yemeni clients is any indication, Taiz is a safe and stable environment for ex-detainees. When the United States repatriated these two men in 2009 and 2010, respectively, the men married and started families and now work in a store in downtown Taiz selling honey, perfume, and spices. Like these men, Mr. Mujahid requires no "rehabilitation" when he returns. He simply needs to get on with his life.

Mr. Mujahid is open to being resettled in another country if that would expedite his transfer. As in Yemen, he will continue to advance his education and seek to improve himself. And wherever he goes, he will have his native drive to succeed. He will be a law-abiding and productive member of society.

Mr. Mujahid is well qualified for transfer. I urge the Board to approve him for transfer and recommend that he be transferred sooner rather than later.

Thank you.