

**PERIODIC REVIEW BOARD INITIAL HEARING, 12 MAY 2016
ABD AL-SALAM AL HILAH, ISN 1463
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OPENING STATEMENT**

As Abedelsalam's Personal Representatives, we would like to thank the Board for allowing us the opportunity to present his case and demonstrate how he is not a continuing significant threat to the United States, her people or her Allies.

First, Abedelsalam was a highly respected leader in his native country of Yemen, and he had a great deal of tribal, political and business influence. After the passing of his father, a tribal leader who had taught him the intricate lessons of leadership and influence, Abedelsalam became the leader of his family at the age of twelve years old. He raised his brothers and sisters with the help of his mother, which earned him considerable respect from his community.

Later, he developed his business and trade skills to such a degree that he was able to become not only financially stable, but prosperous. He got married to a loving and supportive wife, who bore him two beautiful daughters and two handsome sons. He is extremely proud of his family, who support him, and who he wishes to see again soon.

As he continued in his businesses and tribal affairs, he attracted the attention of the political parties in Yemen. Ultimately, he joined the General Congress Party (the largest political party in Yemen) at the request of the President of Yemen, hoping to bring together all of the parties. As a result, his tribe encouraged him to run for Parliament. He used his influence to help raise the economic standards of all the people in Yemen. He helped bring international companies to Yemen to build bridges, roads, airports, power plants, and increase the efforts of energy exploration.

With such great respect and influence, Abedelsalam was asked to help the government in cooperating with other tribes to root out any Afghan trained fighters and have them handed over to the government. This was a task that should have been recognized as aiding the West in its efforts to combat terrorism; however, when he visited another Middle Eastern country to arrange for \$200 Million in financial commitments to Yemen, he was arrested and handed over to U.S. authorities and eventually interned at the detention facility in Guantanamo.

Abedelsalam has never had any intentions to harm the United States, her Allies or the people of the Western Democracies, and he is ready to answer any questions the Board may have for him at this time.

PERIODIC REVIEW BOARD, MAY 12, 2016 ABDULSALAM
ABD AL-SALAM AL-HILAH (ISN 1463)

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

Good morning. I am David Remes, private counsel for Abdulsalam Ali Abdulrahman Al-Hela (ISN 1463). I have represented Abdulsalam in his habeas corpus case for over a decade. I have met with him countless times, and I believe I know him well. I have also met with members of Abdulsalam's family, including his brothers and his wife, on almost every one of my eleven trips to Yemen between 2005 and 2013. I have been to their homes and broken bread with them.

Abdulsalam al-Hela is a strong and justifiably proud man. The son of an influential sheikh, Abdulsalam became an influential sheikh in his own right. He also became a successful businessman and a figure of national prominence. President Ali Abdullah Saleh enlisted him to mediate disputes between the government and the tribes, and the tribes enlisted him to mediate disputes among themselves. Abdulsalam was among those chosen by President Saleh to help manage the deportation of jihadists who had settled in Yemen after defeating the Soviet Union in Afghanistan with assistance from the United States.

The letters of support that we have submitted for Abdulsalam prove the high esteem in which he is held in official and political circles in Yemen. I have discussed his case, on many occasions, with leaders of Yemen's national legislature and senior government officials. The Deputy Leader of the Chamber, Hemiar Al-Ahmar, leads the Committee of notables who have been fighting for Abdulsalam's release for many years. All speak out strongly in favor of his release and are emphatic that he poses no threat to anyone.

The Board should not conclude that Abdulsalam is a continuing significant threat to the United States based on activities or associations 15 to 25 years ago. He is nearing fifty and is through with government and politics. He has no ideology. He wants to restore his life with his

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wife and daughter. He was devastated by the death of his mother and the deaths of his two young sons, who were killed by a live hand grenade left in the area. Abdulsalam also wants to reestablish himself as a businessman, and he should have no trouble doing so. He used to conduct business throughout Europe; he speaks English; and he is cosmopolitan. Building an import-export business for products to be sold to Yemen is an obvious possibility.

Wherever he is resettled, Abdulsalam wants to build, not tear down. He will submit to rehabilitation and close supervision. Abdulsalam is not a continuing significant threat to the United States. I urge the Board to recommend his transfer.

Thank you.