

PERIODIC REVIEW BOARD INITIAL FULL HEARING, 07 JUN 2016
ABDUL LATIF NASIR, ISN 244
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OPENING STATEMENT

Members of the Board, I am the Personal Representative for Abdul Latif Nasir, ISN 244. I will be assisting Nasir with his Private Counsel this morning. I can sincerely state that Nasir is considered to be a thoughtful, intelligent and kind man by his fellow detainees. He is very grateful to have this opportunity to have his case heard today.

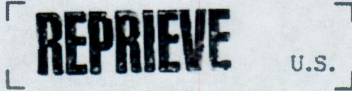
Nasir is eager to begin this process in hopes to begin his life and move forward. As such, his time in Guantanamo Bay (GTMO) has been spent wisely. For example, he has attended many classes offered such as English, Math and Computer Science. But his appetite for continuing to learn does not stop there. He continues to learn on his own through self-education. He has created a 2,000 word English/Arabic dictionary (hand written) that he uses daily to practice his English language skills. While somewhat shy, he still manages to speak to those in English in an effort to better his skills, whenever possible. In my meetings with him, we rarely used a linguist to communicate. He both understands and writes in English very well. He also reads books and watches movies in English frequently.

Nasir is an educated man, with a high school equivalent education and one additional year at the collegiate level. Nasir concentrated his studies in Math and Science. For a short time he also studied at a technical institute. Computer Science is the area of most interest to Nasir and he hopes to work in that field in the future. However, he knows that computer science is constantly evolving and it will take some time to learn everything required to find employment. In the meantime, Nasir is willing and prepared to work for his brother's business in order to start his future in the right direction. He is patient and understands that his time lost has created a hurdle that he can only overcome with hard work and determination.

Nasir has been a compliant detainee while at GTMO, taking advantage of communal living. Therefore, he has allowed himself to be more exposed to various cultures and religious backgrounds. Nasir feels that this cultural exposure has aided in understanding various points of view allowing him to better appreciate others customs and beliefs. Of course, this will only serve to help with his transition into the next phase of his life.

Nasir deeply regrets his actions of the past. I am very confident that Nasir has a strong desire to put this unfortunate period of his life behind him and move on. Nasir will seek to reintegrate into society, marry and have a family of his own. Nasir has not made any negative comments or expressed any ill will towards the United States nor displayed any evidence of an interest in extremist activities.

I appreciate your time in this matter and your consideration for a transfer recommendation.



405 Lexington Ave. Fl. 62
New York, NY 10074

May 23, 2016

Re: Statement by Shelby Sullivan-Bennis, Private Counsel for Abdul Latif Nasir (ISN 244) Periodic Review Board Bearing Scheduled June 7, 2016

Esteemed Periodic Review Board Members,

My name is Shelby Sullivan-Bennis. It is my privilege to represent Abdul Latif Nasir and to appear before this board today. I do so in conjunction with my fellow private counsel, Thomas Anthony Durkin, founding partner of Durkin and Roberts.

Over the course of many years, our lawyers at Reprieve have gotten to know Mr. Nasir quite well. And based on that long experience we can say a few things about him without reservation.

That Nasir is an introspective, intelligent, and kind-hearted man who, after all this time, seeks only to return to a family that is ready to receive him back has been consistently demonstrated over the years. It is not a picture manufactured for the benefit of this Periodic Review Board as today's hearing date has approached. Nor has his behavior changed radically since the widespread improvement in camp conditions that took place in early 2009. Instead—as the materials before this Board demonstrate—these personal traits and the strong support of his family have been on consistent display over the many years he has spent here in Guantánamo.

Mr. Nasir has come a long way since he was sold for a bounty into American captivity back in 2002, having never experienced U.S. or Western culture. One small iteration of how far he has come are the pleasant meetings in English that I, as a female attorney, have enjoyed with Mr. Nasir. He once knew no English; and his culture would not have permitted him to meet with a female lawyer. Over the years, he has learned the English language, and also learned to work with and respect me.

His disciplinary status at Guantánamo has been compliant. He is allowed all privileges and has presented eagerly, helpfully, and gratefully to all meetings with his Private Counsel and Personal Representative.

Mr. Nasir loves and excels at the myriad courses of which he has taken advantage in his time at Guantánamo. With a background in math and science, he naturally excels in computer science and life skills courses, but has also developed a very good understanding of English. He meets with me entirely without the assistance of an interpreter, and we are able to communicate complex details quite well; in the event of confusion, he has always been patient with me.

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REPRIEVE U.S.

Mr. Nasir has—famously, across the whole prison base—drafted his very own 2,000-word English to Arabic dictionary by hand, a sample of which is included in our submission. Since arrival at Guantánamo, Mr. Nasir has made a continuing effort to use this opportunity to further learn and integrate and he has inarguably succeeded at both.

If released from Guantánamo, Mr. Nasir intends to begin full-time work at his older brother's very successful water treatment company in Morocco, surrounded by a supportive and stable family. Mr. Nasir's brother owns and runs a company that installs water treatment systems for swimming pools and other external and internal pools and water features. The company has both commercial and private clients, and the majority of their business comes from installing pools in Moroccan hotels. His brother has stated in his submissions before the board, and multiple times over the years, that he is prepared and eager to train Mr. Nasir to be a water treatment engineer and give him a job working with him at his company.

He will live with his family in their five-bedroom home in Casablanca, and will have ready access to several local service providers, including medical and psychological health facilities based in Casablanca with whom my office has direct contracts for provision of services to our clients.¹

Indeed, Mr. Nasir's entire family has resided legally in Morocco for decades and is well established. His family support network in Morocco is strong; his two brothers, five sisters, three nieces, and four nephews all stand willing and able to support Mr. Nasir's reintegration into Morocco, physically, economically, and emotionally. He has been in regular contact with them through the video calls facilitated by the Red Cross. As the letters, videos and photographs we have submitted to the Board attests, the members of his extended family and community have been ready and eager to have him back throughout the length of his detention, and they remain so today.

The family has provided ample evidence to the Board, in written and video-recorded form directly attesting to their readiness to welcome and support Mr. Nasir. The videos feature ten members of Mr. Nasir's family currently living in Morocco, all offering their considerable resources in support of his return; he will not be welcomed by one or two people, but a household full of stable, working family to help reintegrate him into society and give him purpose.

From Reprieve's combined experience with over three dozen repatriated and resettled Guantánamo prisoners, we have concluded that the most important factor which determines former detainees' success in life is family support. Team members have met the newborn

¹ As our "Life After Guantanamo" project statement submitted to this board details, we have built particularly good relations with the "Association Médicale de Réhabilitation des Victimes de la Torture (AMRVT)," a medical treatment center for victims of torture. The AMRVT's staff is preeminent in the region as an assessment and service provider for people who have lived through trauma, and the center is conveniently based in the Nasir family hometown of Casablanca.

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babies of many of the men we have worked with and watched as they have re-focused their lives on parental responsibilities and bringing up their children as best they can. The extent and nature of the support that Mr. Nasir's family is prepared to provide set the ideal conditions for his release.

We have a program set up to help our clients reintegrate into society called "Life After Guantánamo," which is funded by the United Nations. This is a program that serves the interests of each relevant stakeholder—the client needs the help, and we (the United States) want the client to do well. For several clients who were resettled and repatriated by both Administrations, we worked with the State Department and host governments on transition plans for clients; we have visited clients multiple times after release; we have served as an ongoing point of contact for local authorities; we have facilitated financial support and referrals for needs ranging from job placement to mental health care. We were a trusted and experienced resource in facilitating a successful transition for these clients, who are now rebuilding their lives; a number of former Reprieve clients have even successfully pursued higher education at universities after leaving Guantánamo. Finally, as mentioned, we have specific experience working with groups on the ground in Morocco. We would of course offer the same assistance for Mr. Nasir.

Thank you for taking into consideration the information we have provided. We respectfully submit that Mr. Nasir should be approved for transfer from Guantánamo consistent with the President's mandate to close the prison. I remain at your disposal to assist with any questions you may have regarding Mr. Nasir.

Very Truly Yours,

Shelby Sullivan-Bennis
Reprieve US

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shelby Sullivan-Bennis", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

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