

PERIODIC REVIEW BOARD INITIAL HEARING, 10 MAY 2016
SAID BIN BRAHIM BIN UMRAN BAKUSH, ISN 685
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OPENING STATEMENT

Good morning ladies and gentlemen of the Board. We are the Personal Representatives (PR) for ISN 685, Mr. Said Bakush. We will be assisting Mr. Bakush with his case this morning.

Said has been overjoyed and eager to participate in the Periodic Review process since we first met with him 16 March 2016. When we explained why we were meeting with Said, he mentioned his fellow detainees had talked about their initial meetings with PRs. This filled him with cautious optimism about his own forthcoming meeting with his PRs. Said has maintained a positive attitude throughout all of our meetings.

Throughout our meetings, Said has expressed his desire to be transferred from Guantanamo Bay. He is open to transfer to any country, which will be helpful considering Said also speaks a regional dialect of French from Northern Africa, as well as Arabic. He is willing to participate in any rehabilitation or reintegration program as well. Said looks forward to life after his transfer from Guantanamo Bay, meeting a woman to be his future wife, and starting a family together with her. He also hopes at some point in the future to return to his birthplace to reconnect with his siblings' families and other relatives. Said did not have one career path prior to his detention. Though his formal education ended at third grade, he worked many seasonal part-time jobs ranging from restaurant server, construction welder, vineyard harvester, and baking regional traditional breads and desserts. Said also served a two-year enlistment in the Algerian military upon reaching adulthood. During his time here at the Guantanamo, Said realized, once transferred, he could start a thriving career in driving long-haul trucks and operating/managing a small trucking business delivering food and products to other regional businesses and restaurants. This plan will build upon truck driving training he learned as an enlisted soldier in the Algeria military. His prior part-time job experiences give him an advantage in terms of understanding what seasonal products to prioritize at his future trucking business and will help him to find employment regardless of where he is transferred.

Said has been a quiet, compliant detainee earning the respect of his fellow detainees and detention facility staff. By being exposed to so many people of various cultural and religious backgrounds here at GTMO, Said has had many opportunities to better understand and appreciate their beliefs and customs. This exposure to other nations' people, cultures and religious faiths will serve him well wherever he is transferred.

We are confident that Said's desire to pursue a peaceful way of life if transferred from Guantanamo Bay is genuine and that he does not harbor negativity towards anyone. We remain convinced that Said does not pose a significant threat to security of the United States or any of its interests.

Thank you for your time and attention and we look forward to answering any questions you may have during this Board.