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DETAINEE OPENING STATEMENT

This is an overview of my biography, outlining a period of my life before my detention.

My family consists of four brothers and four sisters, where I was the youngest. Our relationship with each other was extremely tight. We were a tight-knit family. I was so happy living with my family.

I also used to live in a socially harmonious neighborhood where everybody used to feel like family. We were a group of boys with similar age; we used to engage together daily and seasonally, in the same recreational and social activities.

I had an excellent relationship with my relatives, especially my two aunts and their families. We would travel together outside the city during the spring and summer seasons. We enjoyed nature and sightseeing. In addition, due to my social and friendly character, I had a lot of friends.

I fostered great relationships with a lot of talented artists and intellectual friends, some of whom were singers and poets. I enjoyed attending weddings, concerts and folk dancing. In addition, I was a gifted snorkeler, and I loved to cruise the sea.

In general, my life was a happy one. I had a full life ahead of me. I enjoyed spending time with my family, my friends, my relatives and my hobbies. My curiosity and my affection have helped me so much to get acquainted with all that is new. Perhaps, that's why I succeeded to form all kinds of relationships with different spectrums of the Libyan society.

The simplicity of the Libyan people in the community helped me a lot in this regard. Quite frankly, that's why I have so many acquaintances and friends in that simple Libyan community. But there was a segment of that society with which I didn't have any connection. So that led me, as a curious individual, to try to get to know the religious segment of society, and I started to visit their mosques.

At first I frequented the mosques a little bit, and then gradually, I started to visit the mosques regularly. I met new friends in this simple religious community, and I started to identify with them, and to discover a spectrum of new mosques. My love and curiosity continued to lead me to travel to new cities, discovering new mosques, new people and a new spectrum.

I used to feel happy, tranquil and safe, but unfortunately, I was surprised when I learned that Colonel Gaddafi was fighting the members of this social component. Then I was arrested by members of the Libyan Homeland Security who interrogated me, and asked me why I prayed in



several mosques in this city and several other cities. I told them that this was my social nature; I told them that I liked to meet new people and identify with various communities.

Then I told the investigator that I travelled to many towns to visit theaters, poets, singers in order to get to know them. So, why did he not ask me about those travels? The investigator was satisfied with my reply and released me after they ascertained that I did not do anything contrary to the law, or commit any harm to anybody. After, they recognized that my religious education was inadequate and weak. However, they continued to monitor me anyway!

In 1995, the Libyan government carried out a new campaign of arrests on mosques' worshipers. I found myself confronted with three options: to get out of the country; get arrested and go to prison; or take up arms and fight Gaddafi. I chose to get out of the country.

I did not have any other choice but to go to the Sudan; so I escaped through the desert, because I had neither money nor a passport and was under surveillance.

I went to the Sudan on the grounds that Sudan was a temporary station, until I got the necessary funds to travel to Europe. Because I didn't have a passport and lacked adequate funds, I had to stay a little bit longer than I expected in the Sudan. At first, I was very unhappy with my surroundings, the intensity of the heat in that country and the dusty climate. As a social human being, I began to know the people of this country and discovered that they are a kind, good-natured and friendly people. I liked them at once, and I felt the warmth of their friendship and identified with them.

As I said, I liked the people of the Sudan and decided to live and stay with them, and I was thinking seriously of marriage and stability there and actually started looking for work. One of my Libyan friends encouraged me to apply for a job with a trucking company as a truck driver. I loved the idea. This work would give me the opportunity to travel and move around between different parts of the country so that I could get to know and see new environments and new people. So I began working as a truck driver.

But after six months I got into a very bad accident. I had severe fractures and the company where I worked refused to pay my medical expenses and assumed that my injury was not a job related accident. Of course the field of medicine in the Sudan was very mediocre. I had to treat myself on my own expense with the help of some Libyan migrants in the Sudan. But my injury and my treatment took a long time to heal, and at the same time, Colonel Gaddafi was putting pressure on the Sudanese government to hand over the Libyan immigrants in the Sudan. The Sudanese government actually began to arrest the Libyan immigrants and handed them over to the Libyan government.

I had to get out of the Sudan. Some friends helped me to put together some money and a passport, and I traveled to Karachi at the end of 1996. However, when I got there, I was very



shocked because of poor living conditions in Pakistan, the hot climate and the terrible odor. I was even on the verge of returning back to Libya to surrender myself to Gaddafi, instead of staying in this terrible environment. But some Libyans calmed me down and suggested to me to travel to Peshawar in the outskirts of the city of Karachi.

I lived in Peshawar with some Libyan friends. Actually, Peshawar was much better than Karachi, and I started to pursue my medical treatment. I gradually started looking for a passport and a visa in order to depart for Europe. But regrettably, the government of Pakistan started to hand over some of the Libyans to Gaddafi at his request. They began a large campaign of arrests. I did not find any other option but to depart to Afghanistan, because of its closeness to the border. In addition, I didn't have the means to get out of Pakistan. I entered the city of Jalal Abad and met new Libyans; this took place around the end of 1997. I lived in the city for some time, and then some friends suggested to me to visit a camp outside the city of Jalal Abad in order to get to know the environment there. The idea aroused my curiosity and my hobby in discovering new things. I agreed and began to train a little bit with some light weapons and soldier exercises as much as my health allowed me, as my health was poor in addition to my injuries. I stayed there for several months, enjoying my time, the beauty of nature and the surrounding ravines in the neighborhood.

Then, I went back to the city and began to wander the country and mingle with its people. Then I went to Kabul for a visit, and I returned back to Jalal Abad and kept navigating between these two cities. In one of my visits, some friends invited me to tour the battle lines between Taliban forces and Shah Masud. My curiosity led me to accept their invitation, but unfortunately while en route, I stepped on an old landmine that was lying on the side of the road. I lost my foot and shrapnel ravaged my entire body. Once again, I started a new cycle of medical treatment. Because I was not linked to any organization or group, and did not have any money for treatment, I decided to be treated in regular Afghan hospitals. In addition, my other foot was infected from the old accident that took place in the Sudan. I become almost totally disabled.

During my medical treatment, I stayed temporarily at the Arab guest houses. Then, I travelled to Pakistan looking for better medical treatment. Because of lack of funds, I was not successful. I decided to return back to Afghanistan and contacted the Red Cross office in Kabul to be fitted with a new prosthesis. They told me I needed an additional surgery in order to fit me with a suitable artificial limb. I was so frustrated because this was my fourth surgery. As you may know I previously underwent three painful surgeries. Fortunately, however, I found an Italian hospital who agreed to perform my surgery and to treat me free of charge.

I returned back to the Red Cross Office in Kabul, and fitted with my artificial limb, and I started a new phase of rehabilitation in July 2001. My muscles were very weak because of the lack of movement during the past four years.



After the events of September 11, I tried to leave from Afghanistan, but I didn't have a passport or the funds to sustain me. So just before the American invasion of Afghanistan I decided to leave through Pakistan. I stayed for some time with some Libyan friends in Peshawar, but the situation was awkward. They were married and I felt very embarrassed. I spoke with some friends about my situation and they suggested that I move to a different place, until they could arrange for a passport and some funds. I went to live in Faisalabad city, and I stayed with some Yemeni students. After two months, the Pakistani government forces raided the house and arrested everybody.

The Pakistani government sold us to the American forces under the pretext that we were terrorists. I was interrogated in Pakistan and Afghanistan. During the third phase of interrogation, the American interrogator told me that they would release me if my injury was not related to fighting.

When I transferred to Bagram detention center in Afghanistan, I started to cooperate with the interrogator and the administrator in charge of the detention center. I provided advice regarding their treatment of the Qur'an and religious ways. I told them that this religion has not come from Al Qaeda. It had been around for 14 centuries and is believed by 1.5 billion human beings.

When they transferred me to Guantanamo Bay, I cooperated with the administration and was involved with fixing many problems that happened between the detainees and the administration. For example, I helped mediate the strike that happened in October 2002. In February of 2003, I also solved a big problem that had lasted for almost two months.

After you have heard about my past, present and plans and hope for the future, I trust in your decision, and I am sure that you will release me.