

Page 1

The Organization of al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb. From the organization's Shura Council to our good brothers in the Shura Council of the Masked Brigade. [formal greetings]

Our good brothers, we write to you again praying to God that this letter find you and all with you in good health and ever growing in faith and obedience to God. We are forced and obliged to write to you, and we had not wanted our correspondence to center on such issues, given the phase that the jihadist project is passing through in the region and the great challenges that it faces. But what else can we do? We write to you in response to your last letter to the organization's Shura Council, which contained an assessment of jihadist action in the Islamic Maghreb and a viewpoint on what it should be in the future, as well as containing a series of stinging criticisms of the organization's leadership. In truth, your letter was not without some merit and you are credited with that, God willing. But unfortunately, it was also full of many mistakes in judgment and historical errors.

It also contained some amount of back-biting, name-calling and sneering. Such brotherly official correspondences should not contain this style of language, which harms more than it helps and is only that much more damaging coming from a respected council such as your own.

Our good brothers, know that we are not hurt by having our mistakes pointed out, rather it pleases us and makes us happy. We tell those who reveal them to us, God's blessings upon you and may God make us and you the sort who listen to what is said and take from it what is beneficial.

If your letter did not contain such dangerous points that threaten the essence of the organization and its stability _ which much be addressed point by point to achieve right and prevent wrong _ if not for that, we would not reply to you with this response, which may seem somewhat harsh, since in it we adhere to total frankness. Our hope is that your hearts will be open to it as our hearts were open to your letter. We hope as well that these correspondences between us

will be the start of a constructive, serious and frank evaluation.

Before entering the heart of the matter, we want you to know that most of the subject of this letter is referring basically to our brother Abu Abbas Khaled, not to the Shura members in the Masked Brigade or the mujahedeen under its banner in general. Also, it is worthy to note that this letter was written under the principle that one must not delay an explanation once the need for one is known. Your aforementioned letter contained things that are truly dangerous for the past, present and future path of jihadist action in the Islamic Maghreb. To stay silent about them or let them pass without response would be a crime against the people of jihad in this great land. Otherwise, we would not have inked a single line in response and we would have remained silent, as we have remained silent for more than a decade.

And for your information, we only refrained from wading into this battle in the past out of hope that the crooked could be set straight by the easiest and softest means and that reason and the right path would rule between us. And there was hope that a delegation from the organization tasked with repairing and correcting would reach you. But for reasons known only to the world beyond, the delegation was delayed and the wound continued to bleed, and in fact increasingly bled, until your last letter arrived, cutting any hope of staunching this wound and healing it.

And so, it was necessary for us to respond, to remove confusion, make clear any ambiguity and reveal mistakes.

The jihad brethren should know: Washing one's hands of any dirt must involve a degree of stringency and harshness necessary to achieve the desired purity.

So any stringency and harshness in our tone is intended to fix the situation, right the path and correct behavior. God is behind all intentions and he is the guide on the path.

And now, to the heart of the topic. Calling on God's help, we say:

Know, friends, that your letter clearly expressed your main

wish, that is, the desire for independence, separation and cutting of ties with the leadership of al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb.

This expression leaves no doubt that the news we had heard on this issue was correct and that your denial of it is to not to be taken into account. In fact, your chastising of us for believing it without explanation from you is of no value because your letter, in which you responded to this suspicion, just proves your guilt. As for this desire itself, we say frankly to you that we consider it a dangerous attempt to secede from the community, fragment the being of the organization and tear it apart limb from limb, even after all the enemies' attempts to do so came to failure.

The organization has remained as steadfast and mighty as a towering mountain before raging storms and pounding waves for twenty years.

Your offering of the proposal came with slogans that seemed a mercy from the outside, but were harmful on the inside. But the true danger and the sin that is plain as daylight is not found in the proposal itself. We are prepared to discuss any suggestion, no matter what it's called, and we have discussed proposals that go further than yours with the three brigades that are attached to the regional emirate. In fact, we reached an agreement with Ansar edDine that is in accordance with the latest developments in the region.

But the great problem and the great danger is that you put forward your proposal as if you are another party, not belonging to the organization, speaking in its name and completely violating the legal principles and the basics of organization.

(Page 2)

It is also an attempt to drag the leadership of the organization into a conflict and rivalry it has no part in and has never been a party to. In fact, it is always tried and continued to try to be a fair arbiter, giving justice to those who deserve it without wronging or oppressing anyone.

An observer of the historical career and actual behavior of our brother Abu Abbas can easily explain this issue.

The man, based on the loftiness of his ability, his precedence

in jihad and his prowess, remained for more than a decade independent in opinion and autonomous in decisionmaking, linked to the organization's leadership only by slogan. He paid no mind, gave no consideration, did not abide by and did not adhere to the principle of "hear and obey," nor did he stick to the directives or work by the orders coming from the emirate.

This is a historical truth, known to all those who know the man's career and no evidence need be cited.

What happened to Abu Ammar when he held the emirship of the region and what happened afterward with Abu Alqama Nabil, God rest his soul, and what is happening with the emir of the organization Abu Musab since he took up the emirship of the Salafi Group up to this very day, all this is testimony to the fact that Abu Abbas is not willing to follow anyone, and that he is satisfied only when followed and obeyed.

So the insistence on this condition is merely an attempt to give some legal veneer to this behavior, which will lead inevitably _ if the issue is not taken up _ to leaving the organization and breaking the ranks of the mujahedeen, freeing him from all the legal and organizational obligations that he is bound to by the vow of allegiance hanging over him.

Know, dear brothers _ may God preserve you _ that the wish for the independence of the Sahara Emirate from the Emirate of the Islamic Maghreb is not correct, because it has no legal basis or reason. We do not accept the justifications our brother Abu Abbas has put forward.

For example, when he argues that the Emirate is impotent and besieged and that its role in managing the issues of the Sahara is poor or even non-existent at times, and that it has been an impediment to elevating jihadist action in the Sahara: We do not accept this description or this judgment. We see the Emirate's role as quite the opposite. It has exerted and continues to exert the utmost effort to properly manage and direct jihad in the Sahara. And we point to these examples, out of many:

1) Management of the kidnapping file. Clearly, kidnappings are at the top of military action in the Sahara region. The region has seen many of them, and they had important political, financial and media ramifications on the political and military front, as well as on the local, regional and international levels. We don't know of a single case that the Emirate did not oversee. In fact, it dedicated all its time to following the developments of these cases on multiple fronts.

We cite just one of these kidnappings: the kidnapping of the Canadians that the Masked Brigade carried out. The organization paid particular attention to this abduction because of the nature of the Canadian captives _ one of them was the personal representative of the U.N. secretary-general. We strove to give this case an international dimension. We tried to coordinate with the leadership in Khorasan [Afghanistan/Pakistan]. But unfortunately, we met the obstacle of Khaled. Rather than walking with us in the plan we outlined, he managed the case however he liked, despite our repeated insistence that the case should be under the administration of the organization. He chose to step outside the organization and reach an agreement in his own way, he did not follow the organization's instructions, and if not for God Almighty's leniency and the reasonableness of the brother emirs, the problem would have escalated.

Here we must ask, who handled this important abduction poorly? Was it the organization's Emirate, who tried to pressure the crusader alliance to lighten its footprint on our brothers in Afghanistan and, among other goals, free imprisoned brothers and obtain a ransom? (and the value of the hostages would have allowed for obtaining most of these goals)

Does the inadequacy come from consultation and coordination, which we were insistent on _ or does it come from unilateral behavior, along the lines of our brother Abu Abbas, which produced a blatant inadequacy: trading the weightiest case (Canadian diplomats!!) for the most meager price (700,000 euros)!!

2) Directives on activating spectacular attacks: Any observer of

armed action in the Sahara will notice clearly the failure of the Masked Brigade to carry out spectacular operations, despite the region's vast possibilities: There are plenty of mujahedeen, funding is available, weapons are widespread and strategic targets are within reach.

(page 3)

Moreover, you have received multiple directives and instructions from the Emirate of the organization urging you to carry out these acts. Despite all that, your brigade did not achieve a single spectacular operation targeting the crusader alliance. So we don't know who to attribute this fiasco to _ the organization or to you?

3) The armaments file: The armaments file has been given particular attention by the Emirate of the organization and it contributed greatly to stepping up the buying of weapons and military equipment, whether by direction or organizing or supplying. Its instructions on this issue were constant. It ordered the forming of special committees to oversee this issue from the start. It even put the organization's share of ransoms under the control of the emirs to use in this. A reminder: It gave Abu Abbas a considerable amount of money to buy military materiel, despite its own great need for money at the time.

Despite all that, the practical reality testifies to the fact that Abu Abbas did not contribute to increasing weapons purchases, despite the historical and social weight he has in the region enabling him to play an important role in this field. To the contrary, we found the other emirs' contributions to be much more effective and greater in size than Khaled's, which was negligible.

So whose performance deserves to be called poor in this case, I wonder?

4) Regulating of general policy, structure and organization: No region has seen as much attention and support in this aspect as the Sahara.

If we counted the number of correspondences that took place between the Emirate of the organization and Emirate of the South, we

would find it far greater than the correspondences with the other regions combined. The political and military and organizational directives that the Emirate of the organization constantly sent to the emirs of the Sahara brigades testifies to this. This is not limited to the past year and a half as you mentioned, but it goes far beyond.

Since the transfer of brother Abu Yahya (God rest his soul) _ the organization's communications official _ the directives and instructions have come to you one after another. And in the time of Abu Ammar, God keep him, the region saw close oversight by the organization. It solved most of the problems and removed most obstacles. Since that time, the three brigades have cooperated and the region has seen steady growth that even an enemy would acknowledge as much as a friend.

But Khaled remained the only obstacle blocking the efforts of Abu Ammar toward bringing the region together. He complained about him to us throughout his tenure as emir. Then came the period of Abu Alqama's succession _ God rest his soul. This period saw a historic change in the political and military scene of the region. The Emirate followed this change moment by moment, and contact and communication was never broken the entire time despite the harassment and sweeps.

After all that care and attention, you say the Emirate is an impediment and that its performance is poor and non-existent. By God, that's not fair, Khaled.

Here we ask our good brother, why would the break in contact with the Emirate only be with you? Why do you only turn on your phone with the Emirate when you need it, while your communication with some media is almost never ending!

We ask you also: How many administrative and financial reports have you sent up to your Emirate?

Why do the successive emirs of the region only have difficulties with you? You in particular every time. Or are all of them wrong and brother Khaled is right?

5) Rivalry and conflict resolution: Most of the Shariah issues,

conflicts and rivalries in the region have been brought to the Emirate of the organization, and all of them _ thanks be to God _ have received the appropriate attention, study and investigation and have been responded to by the appropriate agencies.

We don't remember a single issue that was brought up and did not get a response, except that one connected to the dispute between the brothers and our brother Abu Abbas. The organization avoided getting involved in it and put it off until Abu Daoud _ emir of the south region at the time _ and Abu Abdel-Rahman Ishaq, the organization's judge _ God end his captivity _ could go. That was because the Emirate knew that these issues could not be dealt with from afar.

So we don't go on and on about the various files, which make clear the incorrectness of any claims that the Emirate has been absent or poor in its administration of jihad in the Greater Sahara, we will limit ourselves to the aforementioned examples.

Our good brothers _ may God set you right _ it is unjust and an affront to describe the Emirate as failing in managing the affairs of the Great Sahara.

And we do not accept the idea that the region has failed in achieving its projects. The contrary is true.

(Page 4)

It is fair to say the region is seeing a very great qualitative leap forward in jihadist action, whether on the military or the political front, and on the regional and international fronts as well. Enemies and friends would both acknowledge that.

It is wrong to judge the organization's policies in the region by saying it has caused a resounding failure and frightening backslide. If the great conquest currently taking place in Mali to be considered a failure and a fiasco?

Our dear brothers, we find it a strange contradiction in your message, the idea of separating from the leadership of the Islamic Maghreb and instead connecting with the leadership in Khorasan [Afghanistan/Pakistan]. The great obstacles between us and the central leadership are not unknown to you. They are far greater than

any obstacles imaginable with the closer, local leadership that borders you. For example, since we vowed our allegiance up until this very day, we have only gotten a few messages from our emirs in Khorasan, the two sheikhs, bin Laden (God rest his soul) and Ayman (God preserve him). From time to time we also received messages from the two sheikhs Attiyat Ullah and Abu Yahia al-Libi (God rest their souls). All this, despite our multiple letters to them for them to deal with us effectively in managing jihad here.

We all know the sheikhs have their reasons and we are completely understanding. We only bring this up so that our brothers understand that the idea of adhering to the central leadership rather than the local leadership is not realistic. It's extremely contradictory, as well, since you'll move from one distance that you already complain about to an even greater one.

Our good brothers, based on all the preceding, it is completely clear to you that what Abu Abbas calls for cannot be justified, and all his arguments are without basis.

Besides being unrealistic, this idea would have destructive effects for the entity of the organization and would tear it apart. Accepting it would lead to only God knows what sedition and strife.

Based on this, we reject this idea. We call on its proponents to recant it and avoid it and we urge them to return to their senses. We warn them against wrecking jihad.

Our good brothers, as further explanation, we'd like to follow up on some of the paragraphs in your letter that to us were clearly historical errors and mistakes in assessment.

1) In the beginning of your letter, you say, "A word of advice to myself and my brothers, it would be more just and fair to try to clarify matters before judging people, because as the scholars said, talk about someone should be fair and just. We did not see this in the letter of brother Abu Obeida, head of the council of elders, that you sent us, which was based on falsified information and exaggerations with which you wanted to support your opinion."

In fact, the message made clear that the brethren's transmission was not based on falsified information or exaggerations, but was based on clear facts proven by the statements made in your message in more than one paragraph, and by verified audio recordings. It was possible for you to confirm what the brothers transmitted. There was no way to deny it and your chastising of Abu Obeida has no rightful basis.

2) Your statement: "We affirm that we have been, continue to be and will remain God willing faithful to our pledge to our leadership, represented by Sheikh Osama, God rest his soul, and his comrade, the patient and esteemed Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahri. We believe they are the leadership of the Islamic Nation, not the leaders of an organization alone. We love them and we were convinced by their program and their experience even before we pledged our allegiance to them. So it's even more now that we are swords in their hands."

Very lovely words. But it is marred by your limiting your allegiance to the sheikhs alone and not more broadly to the regional and territorial emirs who represent them. Do you consider it loyalty to them to revolt against their emirs and threaten to tear apart the organization with no acceptable legal justification?

3) Your statement: "As for your call to us to change our position and work for unity, by God we are surprised, how can we be accused and be judged as impeding the project of unity when we were the first to call for it and work for it and continue to do so,"

The reality refutes these broad claims. How many meetings was Abu Abbas invited to to clear the air and put the internal situation in order, only to see him always refuse to participate, violating the direct orders of his emirs?

In the most recent of these meetings, the Timbuktu meeting that he refused to join, he made his participation conditional on separation and independence. He was the main barrier to unifying the factions.

(page 5)

We are not exaggerating when we say that our brother Khaled has been and continues to be the biggest obstacle preventing the unification of the mujahedeen in the Sahara.

4) Your statement: "As we said above, we were the first to call for unifying the ranks of the mujahedeen."

Again, the facts contradict this. Unifying the ranks of the mujahedeen has always been the primary concern of the Emirate of the organization. It repeatedly ordered you and others to meet and eliminate differences. The invitations to meet even included the brethren in Tawheed and Jihad at a time well before they left.

And remember, when he was on his trip to Libya, Abu Abbas left you an order barring you from attending any meeting called for by the brothers from the three brigades. Indeed, when brother Nabil, God rest his soul, invited brother Glibib to meet, he refused in accordance with Abu Abbas' order, thus being insubordinate to the regional emir. And by law, obedience to the regional emir clearly takes precedence over obedience to emir of the brigade. So Abu Abbas' order to his brigade not to attend and to defy the regional emir is a blatant sin, and there is no obedience to someone who is sinning against the Creator.

So we don't know, where is the eagerness to unify ranks, my friends?

5) Your statement: "On the first day of our entry to Timbuktu, the brother emirs in the brigades of al-Qaida met with Sheikh Abu Fadl and studied the issue of unity among the jihadist factions, particularly the issue of Tawheed and Jihad. Abu Fadl mandated Khaled Abu Abbas with the task of coordinating with Tawheed and Jihad to determine and eliminate the obstacles to unity."

This issue needs some precision. To our knowledge, it was the emir of the organization that ordered Abu Abbas officially to work on bringing together the points of view and accomodating among the brethren. Perhaps Abu Fadl stepped in at a later point and also urged you in this regard. For your information, Abu Abbas made a mistake in

his approaches with the brothers in Tawheed and Jihad, in that he gave the approach to them priority over the Emirate's calls for preliminary sessions among the brigades of al-Qaida, to get the internal house in order first then to expand the initiative to the brethren in Ansar eddin and Tawheed and Jihad. But Abu Abbas refused this and continued in his approaches without informing the organization of the slightest details.

6) Your statement: "They put a condition on Abu Fadl that the brethren in Tawheed must announce their atonement. And the result was stubbornness by some in demanding atonement as a condition for sitting with them. Abu Abbas contacted you and explained the issue."

The position of the Emirate of the organization on this issue was clear, direct and decisive. It rejected the actions of our brother Abu Zeid Abdel-Hameed and ordered the brethren to drop that condition and sign onto unity without it.

7) Your statement: "Then, brother Nabil, God rest his soul, invited us to another meeting in Timbuktu particularly for al-Qaida, and we excused ourselves from attending, knowing the uselessness of the meeting, as we indicated in the previous message."

Abu Abbas' insistence on not attending the meetings of the brethren, even though the Emirate obliged him to join, is what widened the chasm between him and the brethren. It is the main impediment to unifying ranks. By sticking to this stance, it shows an independent impulse, a lack of organizational discipline and a lack of adherence to the principle of "hear and obey." This is what will bring us disasters.

And calling the meetings useless is a mockery of the emirs' orders. The reality proved the use of this meeting, since the proposed committee was formed, it discussed your document and it passed a number of recommendations and decisions. A copy of these recommendations was passed to the Emirate and it responded. It put out another document which gave the broad outlines of the program to be followed in the Sahara in light of the emergency situation on the

ground. The Shura Council of al-Qaida in the Sahara and our brothers in Ansar Eddin adopted these outlines.

The Emirate did not know that you raised a complaint to the central Emirate and that you demanded its adjudication in the case of any violation of the agreement between you. If the Emirate had known, it would have rejected it because it ignored the organizational structure and made a mockery of the basics of administration.

So the question is: Why bypass the Emirate of the organization in such issues when they are under its purview?

8) Your statement: “Here he called some in the secondary ranks of the leadership, particularly brother Abu Bakr al-Muhajer, after their repeated requests and their serious work for unity.”

(page 6)

With all respect and appreciation for our brother Abu Bakr al-Muhajer, we received no confirmation from the central leadership that it was sending the dear brother to us. Regardless of whether he is second-tier leadership or not, he shouldn't be thrust into a conflict and dispute that he has no stake in.

10) [sic] Your statement: “He refused to enter any committee that included the Masked Brigade by its name and he excused himself until he got permission from the leadership. We have him a week so as not to hold up the unity process.”

The actions of Nabil (God rest his soul) were completely correct, and your actions were wrong. He was commissioned legally and organizationally to represent the organization's leadership in such important official meetings and he speaks in its name.

The truth is, the Masked Brigade is but a single brigade and it follows its orders. So why does Abu Abbas want to attend meetings in an individual capacity? Doesn't such behavior confirm a separatist and individualist tendency?

That's assuming that the above-mentioned is true. But what we were told was that the extension of a week was to widen the consultations with the brethren from Tawheed and Jihad, since an

agreement with them was on the verge of being reached.

10) Your statement: “The true spirit of unity _ that is, sincere brotherhood of faith and love of God and affection between brothers _ is absent. What there’s plenty of is speaking ill of each other, deceiving each other and spreading of rumors, and that has nothing to do with unity.”

This we have not heard before. In fact, we know quite the contrary, since brother Nabil, God rest his soul, often reassured us of the good relations among the three brigades. And we never received any complaint, whether from the three emirs or from anyone else.

The reality and the experience is that they were coming together in Timbuktu and other cities and villages under their control and getting along and cooperating.

11) Your statement: “Our vision of unity: We believe that this vision must be based on the consensus of two projects that seem mutually opposed.”

You are not the first to put forward such a vision. If you look back at the document that the Emirate sent you at the Timbuktu meeting, it would have saved you the trouble of thinking and you would have found what you wanted.

Thanks be to God, God gave the brethren of al-Qaida success in reaching an accord with the brethren in Ansar Eddin a few days earlier and on that basis the document was adopted, which called for a structure and organization similar to what you imagined.

12) Your statement: “We did not see for a decade any spectacular military action despite great financial resources, and our works was limited to the routine of abductions, which the mujahedeen got bored with.”

The question is, Whose fault is this failure and neglect? Who is responsible for wasting a decade without achieving any spectacular action harmful to the enemy, despite the repeated calls to you from the leadership in Khorasan and the Islamic Maghreb?

13) Your statement: “To preserve secrecy and the policies of action in the region, since we believe that these matters should not be discussed or transmitted by the Internet, since it is the most likely way for it to fall into the hands of the enemy. Moreover, this is something that Sheikh Ayman talked about in the last message.”

Truly amazing, this pretending to be the protector of the secrets of jihad and this purported mistrust of communication by the Internet.

The bitter truth, which we can barely swallow, is that Abu Abbas aired our laundry publicly and spilled secrets of jihad to random young men whom he doesn't know, out of his reprehensible drive to break up our ranks.

Did he not communicate with the Ansar al-Mujahedeen network [a militant web forum] and was he not insistent that the Masked Brigade should have its own correspondent with it? Did he not tell the supervisor of the network that Abu Abbas is in a conflict with the organization, that he wants to get the leadership out of the straits they are in but that they refuse? Did he not intentionally depict Abu Abbas as the great leader in the field while depicting the organization's leadership as a failure? If not for God's grace, he would have splashed out secrets to the whole world and the heavens above. We have attached for you a selection of these astounding correspondences.

14) The founding of jihadist action in the Great Sahara and its development over years past should not be monopolized by one person. It is a great communal effort to which the greatest sons of the Islamic Nation have contributed, those who have given their lives and those who are waiting to. God reward everyone for this great action with the greatest rewards.

15) The statement that entering the Sahara in 1999 was an individual initiative by Abu Abbas and was not with the help of the group's Emirate needs to be looked at carefully.

The historical testimonies we possess confirm that the Emirate at that time participated in setting up the project by providing the human and financial capital, including sending a group of skilled mujahedeen from the middle region to participate in making this project succeed. Among them were the brother Ayoub and Masoud al-Bara, God rest their souls, along with other brothers, some of whom got their wish and some of whom remain alive and well, God keep them.

(page 7)

16) Your statement: “As a final example of this issue, a team from the brigade was going to Libya in an attempt to tie together the disparate circles of mujahedeen in North Africa. We made considerable progress and hope to God for more.”

Mentioning this example in this context is not right because the Emirate of the organization was the first to push for taking advantage of the events in Libya. It didn't just push and urge, it went further and made decisions and instructions for the forming of teams and bands that were sent into the heart of Libyan territory.

Indeed, two teams were formed in Tabasa [sp?] though they did not meet complete success. Two others were formed in the Sahara, under the Tareq bin Zayed Brigade. They were able to enter Libyan territory and lay the first practical bricks there. Their projects are still active to this day.

We want to point out something of great importance that Abu Abbas would constantly go on about and was obsessed with, and that is that the entry of a band from the Masked Brigade into Libyan territory was without the knowledge of or orders from the Emirate, as usual, and that is a clear transgression against the emir of the organization who had mandated out brother Abdel-Hameed Abu Zeid to officially handle the Libya file.

Here we ask, is this not chaos that cannot be justified legally or organizationally?

17) Your statement: “Based on these factors, we see that the

basic problem is the top-down nature of decision-making in this region in particular, and the presence of the Emirate in Algeria, its failure to follow the needs of the work and its actual details.”

The conclusion that the basic problem is that decision-making is in the hands of organization’s Emirate is an incorrect one, both because the aforementioned factors don’t match the result derived from them and because the aforementioned factors are wrong to begin with. We made clear in the beginning of this message that blaming the Emirate for the flaws in jihadist action in the Sahara is an incorrect claim and there’s no need to repeat what has already been said.

18) It is wrong and outrageous to describe the performance of the organization’s leadership as poor and non-existent. We do not deny that any human effort, by anyone except the prophets _ peace be upon them _ will inevitably have flaws no matter how hard a person tries. But to say it reaches the point of non-existence is nonsense. We made clear in detail in the beginning all the aspects of action in the performance of the leadership toward the Sahara region and there is no need to repeat it.

19) Your statement: “To be fair, your interventions and political directives have been good during the period of the last year and a half. They were useful to us in our proposals that we were calling for in the brigade.”

Praise be to God. If the political and propaganda performance of the organization was good in this period, then it would be useful and beneficial to strengthen and support these efforts by creating a proper atmosphere and avoiding causing problems that impede the continuation of such beneficial policies.

20) As for the criticism of the decisions from the organization’s Shura Council meeting in 2006, in which you said: “For example, around 2007 you held a Shura meeting and discussed the organizational and military situation of the organization and you

decided on measures imposing a centralization that killed and hamstrung activity in Algeria in particular and in our region as well.”

You know well that issues of administrative structure are issues of politics and opinion in which there can be numerous opinions and ideas and in which there is room for dispute. And one should not reject out of hand the conclusion of such debate on such subjects, including planning on matters of soldiers and armies, especially if the best men of the organization participated in the planning and consultation and exchange of opinion.

The question of whether to prefer centralization or non-centralization in military administration depends on the conditions, the place and time, on the strength or weakness of the organization, and on the capabilities to coordinate and communicate. If we look closely at the restructuring of the organization at the time, clearly the reason was there: the lowering number of mujahedeen and the widening territory in the north. And it was the correct decision. As for the south, the three regions were collected into a single region, given the mutual interests and links between them at the time. It was also because of the urgent desire of the brethren in the 9th and 5th region on the necessity of joining the three regions into one. It is not appropriate to go judging this decision as wrong by looking at the situation now, rather one must look at the reality in the field in 2006.

In fact, the qualitative leap in jihadist action in the Sahara and the great progress it has seen indicate that at least this decision was not disastrous, as you described it, but rather was more or less correct. Perfection is dear.

21) As for judging the emirship of Abu Ammar, God preserve him, by saying “he is an official lacking in skill or experience,” that is an unfair judgment that does no justice to the man. He spent his life in the mountains and held leadership positions throughout his jihadist career ever since joining the mujahedeen. He was emir of the Sunna Brigade in Bilaas in the first years of jihad and held the post for several years. Then after leaving the Gamaa Islamiya he took leadership of the Combat Group and lead it until the agreement of unity with the Salafi

Group, a unification that is written in gold, because he worked for it throughout his emirship and risked his life for it.

Throughout his leadership career, those who know him testify to his good planning and performance. When he took the emirship of the southern region, he did his utmost and did his duty and contributed to organizing and structuring the region. He brought its brothers together. He loved them and they loved him and they praise him to this day. The man had extensive education, those who know him testify to his good morals, sense of duty and steadfastness in what is right. As for why he was removed from the emirship, it was not for any betrayal or inability, but was for a mistake he made in moving the brothers from Banta to the Sahara, after which a number of brothers were imprisoned. It is a mistake anyone can make, and the man's value should not be destroyed because of it. He still holds an esteemed place in the organization.

22) Your statement: "Although your council took this decision, it had no members who know this region or have ever lived in it."

The fact is the Abu Abbas was called to attend this regular meeting. Abu Yahya, God rest his soul, took care of all the travel arrangements and urged him to come, but Abu Abbas refused.

Now after six years, he comes and blames his brethren for not consulting with him and rejects things that he could have rejected at the time.

23) Your statement: "The region entered a period of neglect and waste. The result was that after we were once two groupings in this part of the region, now it has become four or five groups, and the emir has gotten lost between this farflung areas."

In our estimation, there is a mutual responsibility for this neglect and waste and it is not far from the truth to say Abu Abbas bears a considerable share of it because of his mentality of independence in decision-making and autonomy in action.

As for the variety of groups in the Sahara region, in our estimation it is a healthy situation, a correct decision, a continuous

benefit, increasing blessing and a natural extension for the waves of sons of the Islamic Nations entering jihad. It has borne fruit in the field, given the vast expanses of the region and the numerous interests there. Don't think that a region equal in size to France and Belgium combined is too small for four or five groups. It's big enough for them and more.

24) Your statement: "This is of course before the east group entered on us after 2003, starting a series of problems that we are still hammered with until this day."

According to our information, the entry of the east group _ that is, Abdel-Razaq, may God end his confinement, and his brethren _ was at the desire of Abu Abbas at the time. Then after their entry and after working together for a time, the insinuations of Satan came between them, things fell apart and what happened happened.

25) Your statement: "We called on all the successive leaderships in Algeria, including yourself _ in letters that are present in the office as evidence _ about the necessity of sending veteran brothers to develop the work with us. But our calls and suggestions and alternatives were met with apathy. By the time you realized the truth of these matters, it was difficult to get to the region and years were wasted."

The historical information we have shows otherwise. The Emirate sent individuals as support to the region twice. After they spend a time in the desert with you, some returned and some stayed, after the division that occurred among you. The last delegation sent to you was that of Abu Daoud. It spent three whole years waiting to get to you, until the members dispersed because of the long time. Some of them were killed, some were imprisoned and some turned.

Allow us to ask here. Who deserves to be described as apathetic and negligent in these vital issues, the organization or someone else?

26) Your statement: "The emir confronted us with his approval

of the east group, which entered the region without the permission of the emir at the time Abu Hamza or the consent of us, who live in the region. After we worked out the issue with the brother Abdel-Haq, God rest his soul, and he committed to returning his cadres to their region, they returned with a letter signed in the name of the emir approving them to work, without consulting with us in a clear show of contempt. This behavior was repeated by the emir more than once and it stood in the way of our program and policy. So effort was wasted in this divisiveness, which we hold him entirely responsible for.”

By our information, the emir of the organization’s permission for Abdel-Haq, God rest his soul, to enter the Sahara was issued after consultation with the brothers. It came after great insistence by Abdel-Haq, God rest his soul, who saw great potential that was not being realized in the Sahara, and he and those with him wanted to bring it to fruition.

Indeed, God brought great conquests through this group after it entered the Sahara. Considerable quantities of weapons, ammunition and military equipment were bought. It also contributed to revving up military action, especially kidnappings.

To our knowledge, this group was not the cause of the divisions that exist now. Rather, its members fit in well with the other brothers, they joined, unified and were in agreement. And on this subject we want to point out to you, that the decision to outline the activities of the Tareq bin Ziyad Brigade in the Sahara is unimpeachable and of good quality legally and practically. It is among the authorities of the emir alone, and it came after consultation and study of the situation in the Sahara and the region, and its benefit has become clear, a truth that even the enemy has testified to.

27) As for your whispering in the ear of the organization’s emir, we consider it as derisive and snide and denigrating a figure who by our ancient Islamic law should be esteemed and respected, even if he were a black Ethiopian slave with a head like a raisin.

It is ignorant and baseless talk. How else to call the breaking of

trust between the emir and his soldiers without knowledge or evidence. Is not saying such things considered conspiracy against the emir, which the law forbids of us? Furthermore, it is right to cast judgment on something that happened 20 years ago. By God, what you are claiming is just a delusion with no basis in truth, and may God forgive you for it.

28) Your statement: “Among his great mistakes was the emir’s attempt to thwart the appointment of the region’s emir by consensus and unanimity, in the case of brother Nabil Abu Alqama’s elevation (God rest his soul) to that position.”

Amazing and strange, this citing of Abu Alqama’s elevation (God rest his soul) to emir at this junction.

Yes, in the beginning the emir of the organization did reject making him an emir (God rest his soul). The reasons were given in the correspondences between him and regional Shura at the time. He was eager to see a native of the region be emir. But the brothers refused anyone but someone from outside. After a short time, he returned and gave him authority over the region, and the time was not so long that anyone could think it was the cause of all these splits.

And so while we’re at it, after Nabil was given authority, why did Abu Abbas boycott him and effectively not recognize his emirship? He managed the matters of his brigade without turning to him. And note, Nabil _ God rest his soul _ complained about Khaled up to the very last day of his life. He urged the emir to put an end to his violations, because Khaled, in his words, was the sole intractable obstacle in his path (God rest his soul) preventing the unification of the mujahedeens’ ranks in the Sahara.

29) As for your chastising of the council of elders and its president that it did not perform its duties in such situations when it urged you to obey the emir:

First of all, what makes you think that’s all the council and its president did? Do you have any knowledge of the discussions and consultations among them on this issue? You blame them for their

advice to you of “listen and obey” after you asked the emir for a review of his order and he did not change his decision, but what advice do you expect them to give? To encourage your insurrection and call on you to revolt?

The duty in such reviews between a leader and his followers is for the follower in the end to come back to the emir’s orders. He should not defy him and do as he chooses. This is not religion.

Second, we know of nothing in our religion that says only those who have recently joined jihad are called on to “listen and obey” and that the older and more veteran ones are somehow excepted.

It is also wrong to cite scholars out of context. The situation you refer to that the scholars were talking about doesn’t resemble our situation at all.

It is truly surprising, this idea that the emir wanted your destruction when he ordered you to agree and unite your ranks under the leadership of one man from among you. He repeated it numerous times. Is that what you see as wishing your destruction? By God, it’s very strange.

30) The call to open the door of communications with the central Emirate, the emirs of the regions, the brigades, the groups, the elders and all the official.

This is a strange request. It’s not right to transfer the powers of the Emirate to other emirs, no matter how distinguished their position. This is a power of the Emirate, no one else. If the door was opened, then it would bring great evil upon jihad.

Actually, the brigade emirs such as yourself are supposed to open the door of communication and correspondence with the emirs close to them, especially with emir of the region and the emir of the organization. In rare cases, communications can be opened with others, only if it meets the interests of jihad.

Also, isn’t it a clear contradiction, this request to open communication with coordination with the brigades and groups across the regions, while you ask us not to bother you with requests to communicate with on the internet in the future?

Finally, dear brothers, know that we only wanted with this extended letter to repair what we can _ and there is no success but from God. Our great hope is that you open your breasts to it, that you receive it with a welcoming and open heart and that these messages, with their harshness, will be a true beginning towards a serious self-review to fix the state of our jihad, which is our pride in this life and our savior in the next.

We call on you to measure your positions by the law and the law alone. Open the doors to good and close the doors to evil. It's better to be at the tail end of what is right than to be at the head of what is wrong.

In conclusion, we hope that communication and correspondence between us is not broken and that you do not forget us in your prayers. We entrust you to God's protection, and He never loses those in His care. Peace, and His mercy and blessings, be upon you.

Date: October 3rd, 2012

Signed

The Shura Council of the Organization

1_ Abu Obeida Yousef, president of the elders council.

2. Abu Hayan Assem, the judge of the organization and elders council member from the west region.

3. Abu Mohammed Abdel-Nasser, head of the military committee of the organization and elders council member from the middle region.

4. Abu Abdul-Ilah Ahmed, head of the organization's political committee and elders council member.

5. Abu Mohammed Salah, head of the organization's media committee and elders council member.

6. Abul-Faraj al-Hussein, head of the organization's medical committee and member of the shura council.

7. Abu Hazem Mawloud, judge of the middle region and elders

council member from the middle region.

8. Abu Abdel-Rahim Abdullah, elders council member from the middle region.

9. Abu Khaythema Ahmed, elders council member from the middle region.

10. Abu Abdul-Rahman al-Taher, elders council member from the east region.

11. Abu Yasser, Shura Council member.

12. Abu'l-Ezz Mohammed, Shura Council member.

13. Shueib, Shura Council member.

14. Abu Ayyad Yahya, organization's communications official and Shura Council member.