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In the name of God the most merciful

Honorable shaykh,

God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you

This is a letter from a loving brother whom you know and who knows you and who accompanied you on some business and programs, but conditions prevented us from communicating. My heart is full of love and appreciation to you; it gets happy for your happiness; and it hurts for your sadness; it longs to meet you, and still loves you in God. If we disagree on some of the issues, this disagreement should not keep us from communicating and offering each other advice. Instead, it should strengthen it and make offering advice an obligation.

Based on that, I wrote to you this letter, which I hope that you will receive with love, appreciation, and an open heart, especially when you know who the sender is. Regardless of the hardships and adversities, brotherhood in God will always grow stronger.

You know that previous crises showed that loyalty between the faithful continues, and admiration and forgiveness continue regardless of the differences in points of view.

Honorable Shaykh,

At this era, everyone knows about your unprecedented contributions and great efforts in the field of jihad, the revival of the spirit of jihad in the nation, and mobilizing its energy and cadres to carry out this obligation. You have indeed become the chief innovator in this field at this day and age.

Among the most prominent landmarks of accomplishment is breaking the American illusion, uncovering the truth about its fake strength, reviving the confidence of the nation in itself and its capabilities, and targeting with precision the greatest enemy and the head of the snake without getting distracted by opponents and enemies who are only some of the poison and secretions of that snake.

As your Eminence knows, the greatest thing that one can win in this life is God's pleasure; anything less than that would be considered limited gains that might have bad consequences. One

does not leave his homeland, money, and family behind except for seeking God's pleasure. We consider you one of those who dedicated his life and his money for the sake of God, but God is the ultimate judge. Careful consideration, self-examination, requesting guidance from God, and striving to reach truth and virtue and abiding by them are among the greatest reasons for success.

Also among the great reasons for success are consulting others, getting to know their opinions, even if they differ from yours, and considering those opposing opinions because some of them might lead to the right path and truth.

God said, "Consult with them on the matter." Here you notice that even the one who received the revelation and who communicated with the angel Gabriel ordered consulting others and seeking their opinion.

No doubt that one's distance (due to security situation and other reasons) from reality can weaken his precise vision, and it makes it harder for him to detect reality in a subjective manner, which sometime might affect the accuracy of his opinion.

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The reason is that he bases his opinion on general information given to him by admirers and sympathizers who mix up wishful thinking and reality.

This is like asking people to give you their opinion regarding a specific event. They might give you the number and identities of those who agree with them and understate those who disagree with them. We have noticed something similar among those who agree with you and who inform you of the situation.

You can overcome this problem by listening to the opinions of those who are neutral on the issue or even those who disagree with you in order to get a clearer picture of people's points of view and evaluation of the event. Getting various vantage points is in our interest and can serve the decision, opinions, and positions that we form.

Being chased, besieged, and distant is not the best environment for thinking and for forming the right opinion and decision. In this case, one should seek the opinion of brothers who are outside of the hardship that he is in and should be wary of his own opinion, which could be subject to influences that he is not

aware of. None of us believes that he is immune from making mistakes, and we should apply this belief by reexamining and reconsidering our opinions.

One can see his weakness and deficiency when he examines old decisions that were later proven to be mistaken or assumptions that turned out to be wrong. Returning to the truth and backing away from an opinion once you discover its falsehood is a reason to be proud and is honorable. That is the tradition of the companions of the Prophet, the faithful scholars, and leaders of our nation. Retraction does not take away from the person; to the contrary, it elevates him in this life and in eternity.

One can make a mistaken decision, but he will be excused for it. However, once he becomes aware of the mistake, but insists on his decision, there will be no excuse, and that might be a reason for his failure in what he does.

A quick review of the journey of work and the changes in it during the last twenty years reveals the effects of circumstances and variables that are out of one's control, but which one had to deal with based on the facts that were available to him at that time. Sometimes one makes the right decisions and sometimes does not, but one should benefit from this enormous experience (including the right and the wrong) in future work and correcting the course.

To complete the picture, here is a short review of the journey of work and the accompanying changes and transformations over the last twenty years.

-Work started with supporting the Afghani jihad, sacrificing everything, deploying youth to the fields of jihad, and placing great hope on the Islamic state in Afghanistan, which was considered a starting point for moving to all other countries in the world.

-After a period of Afghani jihad and the attrition of many of the cadre and money, the idea of establishing an international Islamic force, which is not only based in Afghanistan, and Afghanistan is not its top priority, came to being.

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Most of the work in Afghanistan turned to the goal of luring and preparing youth.

-Then the Gulf crisis and Iraq's invasion of Kuwait took place. You offered your services to Saudi Arabia to defend it in confronting the Iraqi regime in order to not use the foreign forces, and you asked the youth from the peninsula (Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and other Gulf countries) to return to their countries to participate in confronting the Iraqi invasion.

-After that phase, the goal became more precise and your approach and focus turned to attacking the head of the snake, America. You abandoned all jihadi work for the sake of this. America became the main enemy, and you declared a war against it and demanded it to get out of the lands of the Muslims and stop its dominance over Muslims.

-Immigrating to Sudan and calling on others to do the same and placing great hope on the Sudanese regime, which subsequently pressured you to abandon the political and jihadi approaches.

During this phase, your approach was:

--This phase was not conducive to jihadi work due to the many challenges, pressures, pursuits, and siege. Instead that phase was a phase of spreading the faith, building the culture, instilling the doctrine of "there is no god but God" in the hearts of the nation, and teaching renunciation of worldly things in order to prepare for jihad. Based on this conviction, the Association of Mus'ab Bin-'Umayr for Preaching was established and headquartered in Sudan.

--As pressure increased, you decided to move to Afghanistan. You were not keen on fighting alongside Taliban or supporting them until Taliban took control of Jalalabad, Kabul, and the rest of the country. You got to know them better, you accepted them and got comfortable with their approach, and pledged allegiance to Mullah 'Umar. That phase was the phase of working on completing the control over the rebellious north and deepening the roots of the infant Islamic emirate, which revived the ambitions that were on the verge of collapsing.

--Before the state was able to stand on its feet and complete its control of the entire country, you started to operate externally by targeting the head of the snake. You were moved by the youth who were gathering, eager, ready for sacrifice, and whose numbers at training camps were increasing. Then came the operations of Nairobi, Cole, and then 9/11, which ended the government of Taliban (the Islamic Emirate) on which many hopes were hanging.

These phases were accompanied by ideological changes and transformations that I do not wish to talk about or evaluate because this is not the place for that. My intention is to talk about the phase that we are in, which is the phase of work in Muslim countries in general and the Peninsula in particular.

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Before I get into the details of the matter, I wish to ask a question here: Why the peninsula only? Do you only care to protect yourself and your security and let the entire world burn down?

I wish to say:

First: We think that you should not work inside Muslim countries, even if it is directed against the head of the snake, because this can cause great harm to Muslim people and can inflict great damage on various areas, including preaching, charitable work, dependence on God, and other areas. It also gives a chance for the head of the snake to get stronger and spread its poison in a greater manner.

Second: We think that the best places and most effective places for attacking the head of the snake are the locations in which it explicitly got involved militarily, such as Afghanistan and Iraq. Concentrating efforts in those areas is better than dispersing them and prevents the harm that could accompany them.

Third: There is no doubt that the peninsula is unique and different in terms of supporting jihad through cadre, financially, and morally. The peninsula is considered the rear base for all jihadi work in the world, starting from Afghanistan and Chechnya, all the way to Iraq and Palestine. Attacking this base has a very clear and apparent effect on all jihadi work.

Fourth: The best way to prevent the shedding of impermissible blood and not killing faithful people is to not work inside Muslim countries. I am sure that your Eminence knows that God said, "If it were not for faithful men and women among them, we would have punished them harshly." If faithful swords stopped fighting for fear of hurting the few faithful in the nonbeliever society, can you imagine the ruling when we talk about Muslim population in a Muslim society?

Fifth: Some of the brothers, who were among the veteran mujahidin and who dealt with some of the leaders of the organization, feared that the events in the peninsula might be influenced by anger, envy, and hatred toward citizens of the peninsula because of some past positions.

Sixth: When looking at the justification for the events, one has to wonder why this is not taking place in Pakistan in spite of the fact that it is closer geographically, easier to reach, known for its strict position toward the mujahidin, handed over some leaders and others to America, overtly supported the American occupation, and actively participated in toppling the Islamic emirate. I do not think that you should target Pakistan, but I am just saying that to make my point clear. Why didn't this take place in Kuwait and Qatar when they are the greatest agents and collaborators for the Americans?

The phase of working in the Arabian Peninsula:

It seems that those who know you well say that you did not support working inside until recently. Perhaps the start was based on personal efforts and initiatives that you were not aware of, especially because when we wrote to you in the past, you expressed that work inside would be inappropriate and would cause great harm. At any rate, events showed that it was a mistaken decision that had very dire consequences, including:

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-Harming jihad and the mujahidin in all arenas.

--The nation lost many of the leaders and cadre who were killed or arrested because of these operations.

--Pressuring those who support jihad in Chechnya, Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, and other places and completely cutting off the funding, which caused great damage to jihad there.

--Banning youth from joining jihad and tightening the security on all passage points that lead to jihad, and arresting people going to jihad and returning from it.

--Detaining a large number of youth and sympathizers around them and exposing them to temptation that might be detrimental.

--Going after and perusing anyone who has ties to jihadi work.

--Suffering by many families of killed, detained, and wanted individuals.

--Banning any talk or promotion of jihad through lectures, sermons, and forums.

--People repulsed by the word jihad and its enemies continue to defame it.

--The jihadi stream lost many of its honest and faithful scholars and preachers who defended jihad and adopted its causes.

- Damaging the charitable work around the world and in all fields:

--Shutting down several charitable organizations that were carrying out relief work all over the Muslim world, such as al-Haramin Charitable Organization.

--Banning the collection of donations from individuals, organizations, and companies under any name and for any activity.

--Freezing bank accounts of charitable individuals and organizations. These accounts had great amounts of money that the poor were deprived of.

--Arresting anyone who is suspected of collecting money and supporting a charitable project that does not belong to an official organization.

--Stopping many charitable and relief efforts that were vital for needy Muslims all over the world (digging wells, building mosques, orphanages, education, health, clothing, and so on).

-Damaging the spread of the faith and fear of God.

-Giving an excuse to the deviated approaches to attack Islam in general and jihad in particular and push forward the projects of Westernization and secularism.

-Giving the enemy a chance to get involved more than before and pushing the state to jump into the lap of the enemy.

-Force official entities to deal with counter-terrorism in a much stricter way, change curriculums, and impose censorship on media in accordance with the so-called American campaign on terrorism.

-The great damages inflicted on Muslims' lives, properties, and freedoms.

Things are moving for people in a way that they did not want or seek. They even used to condemn people if they did any of the following:

You used to condemn any act that did not target the head of the snake and used to consider it unjustified and a waste of capabilities, but now because of the latest events, the battle has shifted from the head of the snake to its tail and from America to the regimes. This was a colossal strategic error that caused many losses in exchange for a very limited number of gains. These gains do not compare to what was sacrificed for them.

One can notice the lack of precision in predicting the position of scholars and the public toward the events inside. Perhaps the picture that is being conveyed to you is different from reality. I would like to say to you in all honesty, I do not know anyone who is a scholar, an intellectual, or a preacher who supports these actions or views them as legitimate. Many of the veteran mujahidin and the public stand against these actions. The most that is happening is some sympathy toward those who are innocent but were arrested and somehow hurt, or for believing that these youth were falsely accused of carrying out these actions.

The reality is that many of the actions of the youth and your statements, such as your call to target oil, turned people against you, especially scholars and intellectuals. If criticism against you would not be viewed as support to your crusader enemy, you would have seen much stronger open positions against you. Many of those who are quiet are doing so because they do not want to cause more problems.

Public opinion polls in the Muslim world prove that support to you among the Arab and Muslim people has shrunk after you targeted the peninsula.

It is not appropriate for an honest person to think that he is always right and that those who disagree with him are ignorant,

hypocrites, or agents. Perhaps these people are correct on some issues.

Such belief leads a person to have hatred, bad intentions, and suspicion toward brothers. I told some brothers more than once, "You are more worthy of the accusations that you throw at those who disagree with you. You would not like it if those whom you insult for disagreeing with you, responded to you in the same way in terms of suspicion, insults, and accusations of being agents."

The solution:

Honorable Shaykh, I suggest that you get out of this crisis by conducting a review of this past experience and its apparent negative consequences.

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You should go back to the principle from which you started and that is focusing on the head of the snake and targeting the greatest enemy of the Muslims, and not scatter the efforts and strength outside the target. The process of targeting should be governed and should not be conducted inside Muslim states in order to prevent the negative consequences I talked about earlier.

The regimes do not get hurt by targeting Americans in their countries. Instead, these attacks are confirmations that they are with the Americans and that they are working against the enemies of America and that they are being targeted like America.

As you know, one of the countries was about to be listed as a sponsor of terrorism and was about to be listed in what Bush calls the "Axis of Evil," but after the events, it went on to top the list of countries fighting terrorism and won the recognition and praise of the Congress for its efforts in this field.

Also, the political jurisprudence, which expanded to include dealing and having common interests with the Safawis who have a dangerous Persian project that threatens the presence and the future of the Muslim nation, will not be hampered by marginalizing and weakening the collaborating regimes that do not have any control. Any attacks on those countries negatively affect the Muslim people in the first place.

Some observers think that these acts help the interests of the head of the snake because they give legitimacy and justification to many of the projects that have been in the planning phase for a while and gives it (TN: the head of the snake) a chance to implement them. These acts convinced the world and the people that the American war on terrorism is just.

These acts did not only target infidels and enemies of Islam, but they target security and sources of energy. These sources of energy are one of the most important sources of income and source of prosperity that that Muslims in these countries enjoy. If these sources of energy are damaged, all people get hurt and their religious and worldly interests get damaged.

As for your statement about targeting oil because the ones who benefit from it are the enemy, it was not a good or an acceptable statement, unlike your statements and your talk in support of the persecuted and to incite attacks against the occupiers of Muslim lands.

Targeting oil can lead to great negative consequences, including:

1-It is the property of the nation and does not belong to a segment or even the ruling regime, for it is the main source of income. Establishing beneficial service projects for all Muslim people, hospitals, roads, communications, salaries, and infrastructure, depend on revenues from it. To make this picture clearer, you can compare between the infrastructure and prosperity in oil-producing countries and those in non-oil producing countries.

The enemy benefiting from oil and the regimes taking a large amount of the revenue from it are not a justification or a reason that would make the people accept and support targeting it.

2-The targeting of oil creates an excuse for foreign powers to intervene and impose international dominance over energy resources and get involved the country's security affairs and beyond, to include intellectual, cultural, minority, and sectarian affairs.

3-The damage inflicted on innocents working in these facilities and those around them in terms of their lives, property, and honor as result of targeting them was prohibited by God.

Therefore, I suggest to you:

1-Issue a clear and unequivocal statement to anyone who listens to you and accepts your opinion to direct the work and focus it on the head of the snake in its home or in areas that it occupies, such as Afghanistan and Iraq, and to dedicate all capabilities toward this goal. Also, stay away from operating inside Muslim countries in order to protect the reputation of the mujahidin, protect their acceptance within Muslim societies, prevent any harm to the mujahidin and supporters of jihad, prevent the secularists and liberals from exploiting these events, and direct the souls of the youth for the great battle against the head of the snake.

2-Issue your orders to your cadre to immediately abandon all work inside Muslim countries and move on to conduct jihad against the occupier in Iraq and Afghanistan.

3-Call on Muslims, especially the scholars, intellectuals, dignitaries, and businessmen, to stand beside the mujahidin against the great enemy that directly or indirectly stands behind every catastrophe inflicted on the Muslims.

This would also show the truth to all Muslims about the regimes that claim to be fighting terrorism because they are getting attacked and the regimes that pretend to be crying over the Muslim blood. This would place these regimes in a position where they will have to choose between standing in the trenches of the enemy and continuing to support them against the mujahidin or stand on the sidelines and open the way for the mujahidin to deal with their enemy.

In closing:

1-Hopefully God will give you honor in this life and in eternity and use you for improving the situation of the Muslims in general and the mujahidin in particular. I am writing to you based on my knowledge of you, your desire for the truth, and my intention to not see you accused or blamed by anyone. I pray to God to guide you because you went for jihad on His path, seeking His pleasure. God said, "We will show our paths to those who conducted jihad for us."

2-The mistaken decision by Khalid Bin-al-Walid (may God be pleased with him), which led the Prophet (peace be upon him) to say, "O God, I am innocent of what Khalid did," did not prevent Khalid from becoming God's sword against the infidels. Also, Khalid's stature did not keep the Prophet (peace be upon him) from criticizing him openly. Also, 'Usama Bin-Yazid, who made a mistake and the Prophet (peace be upon him) criticized him and scolded him, was later chosen by the Prophet (after making a mistake and admitting that he made a mistake) to lead the first army to leave Medina after the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him). The army included the shaykhs of immigrants and locals.

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We salute those who help secure Muslims, keep harm and fear away from them, win their prayers, and support the oppressed and defend them from harm.

O God, the lord of Gabriel, Michael, Israfil, the creator of heaven and earth, you know the unknown, and you are the judge of your worshipers when they disagree with each other, guide us to the truth and to the right path.

I pray to God through His generosity to protect you, guard you, preserve you from the harm of the infidels, bless you wherever you are, use you to support His faith, and make you one of His victorious loyalists who have no fear or sadness.

The one who loves you,  
Riyadh  
14 September 2006