



AN OPEN LETTER

“VERILY I AM THE NAKED WARNER”

BY:
ABU BAKR AZ-ZAYLA'I

(FORMER HIGH RANKING ASH-SHABAAB LEADER)



al-Haqaiqa

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

A Brief Glimpse At The Author

Born 1960 in a village near Hargeisa, Ibrāhīm Hāji Jāma' Mī'ād was raised in a righteous and upright household. He hailed from the Isaaq tribe and was from its Habar Awal clan.

His father was from the well-known du'āt and shuyūkh of Hargeisa during that time period. His mother was a righteous woman who reared him up upon Islamic teachings, etiquettes, poetry, and history. He was one among seven children having a brother and five sisters.

He was enrolled into *Muka Durduro Elementary School*, then into *Ahmed Gurey Middle School* and then into *Farah Omar High School*. He was known for not falling short of scoring the highest grades.

As a youth he was known to dislike idleness and frivolous matters, thus he would not spend time with his peers who often wasted their time. He was known to have never entered a cinema (which were rampant at the time) or to have sat at a tea shop (which was and still is a common place for Somalis to socialize). In his later years whenever he saw du'āt and mujahidīn wasting their time at tea shops he would reprimand them.

In 1975 he joined the group known as *Wahdat ash-Shabāb al-Islāmī*, which at the time was a well-known group in northern Somalia calling people towards Allāh. While part of the group he began delivering reminders and speeches to others. He encouraged the group's youth to gather for halaqāt (Islamic lessons).

Sometime after graduating high school he desired to perform Hajj, so he went along with some of the group's youth to Mogadishu where they attained their visas before departing.

In 1981, upon returning from Hajj, he received a scholarship to attend a university in the United States located in Virginia, where he studied economics. While a student in the US he continued his da'wah activities and developed a strong bond with the Muslim community present.

He mentioned that at one point whilst in Virginia he saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in a dream. He said:

"I saw myself in a masjid where the Prophet ﷺ was delivering a lesson, in front of him were some papers. It so happened that one of the papers was blown away. So me and another man competed to bring it back to the Prophet ﷺ and the other man beat me to it."

Years later when he narrated this dream to others they asked him of the dream's interpretation to which he responded:

"The dream already fulfilled itself, the man I saw in the dream preceded me to jihād and I met him in Pakistan."

He attended one of 'Abdullah 'Azzām's lectures in Virginia which inspired him participate in jihād, thus he told him about his desire to go to Afghanistan and he accompanied him back to Afghanistan, leaving everything behind in 1987.

Upon arriving in Afghanistan he trained in the camps and participated in the battles against the communists. It was during that time period that he became known as Abu Muslim al-Somali (one of the many names he was known by including Abu Bakr az-Zayla'ī, Mu'allim 'Alī and Ibrāhīm al-Afghānī).

He developed good ties with the likes of 'Abdullah 'Azzām, Tamīm al-'Adnanī, Abu Rawdha as-Sūrī, Abul Walīd al-Filastīnī, Abū Mus'ab as-Sūrī, Ayman adh-Dhawāhirī, Usāmah bin Lādin (with whom he was with during the well-known battles at Tora Bora) as well as many others who he met during the fight against the Communists and the reign of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.

He was vouched for by Abū 'Ubaydah al-Banshīrī and Abū Hafs al-Masrī and sent to Somalia along with two others shortly after the fall of Siad Barre's government.

He thus helped form the *Al-Ittihad Movement* in 1991 and established several training camps, however after some complications with the movement he left Somalia for Kashmir in 1992. In Kashmir he worked with Hāfiz Muhammad Sa'id, one of the founders of *Lashkar al-Taiba*.

He would travel back and forth from Kashmir to Somalia until 1996 when he helped found the *Al-'Itisām* group in Las 'Anod, northern Somalia; during that four year period of travel, whenever he would be in Somalia he would provide support to mujahidīn in Eritrea.

He remained part of the group and was part of its administrative council until 1997 when the group distanced itself from armed struggle. Thereafter he returned to Hargeisa where he would alternate between participating in fighting against the Ethiopians in western Somalia and tending to his ill parents until they passed away.

In the beginning of 2000 he arrived in Afghanistan for the second time accompanied by Ādam 'Ayrow, Mukhtār Robow, Abu Jabal as-Somālī, 'Umar Dheere and Abū Usāmah as-Somālī. He participated in

the al-Faruq, Jihadwal and Khalden training camps, as well as taking intensive security and shar'iah courses throughout his stay.

After the 9/11 attacks he, his companions (except for Abu Usamah who was killed in an airstrike) and others retreated with Usāmah bin Lādīn to Tora Bora and eventually after their dispersal he ended up reaching the Afghanistan/Pakistan border where he was assisted by Hāfiz Muhammad Sa'īd into Pakistan and from there he returned to Somalia.

In 2003 he performed his second Hajj, despite the chance of capture and captivity being high, he returned unharmed.

In 2006 a confederation of Islamic Judicial organizations, judges, students of knowledge, preachers and teachers formed a policing, military and governing body which became known to many as the Islamic Courts Union or ICU. From the summer of 2006 to the early winter of 2007 the ICU was in control of most of southern Somalia.

During the ICU period Ibrāhīm was one of its most influential members being involved primarily in the teaching and da'wah departments. It was during this time that he started printing and publishing the *al-Jihād* paper in Mogadishu.

After the Ethiopian invasion and the dispersing of the ICU he was amongst those who retreated to Somalia's deep wilderness, however after a while he returned to Mogadishu along with others to carry out operations against the Ethiopian occupation in the capital.

After the rise of the *ash-Shabāb* movement, which he helped found, he participated (and sometimes led) the well-known and fierce battles, with a special focus on the Jubba region.

He was the head of *ash-Shabāb*'s shūrā council (until it was disbanded by Abū Zubayr Godane) and was also the head of the joint Islamic administration in Kismayo and Jubba, which several groups and movements came under (until *ash-Shabāb* betrayed them all).

It was in Kismayo where he began publishing and printing the *al-Hisbah* newspaper and helped Abu Talha Samatar as-Somālī (who is currently imprisoned by *ash-Shabāb*) in establishing *Radio al-Andalus*.

He continued to hold various positions in the *ash-Shabāb* movement until he came at odds with them due to their deviance and tyranny, his attempts for reformation eventually cost him his life.

On the 20th of June 2013, not long after he penned his open letter *Verily, I'm the Naked Warner*, he was assassinated after the Maghrib prayers while en route to a masjid to deliver a speech. *Ash-Shabāb* gunmen gunned him down that night along with Mu'allim Burhān ('AbdulHamīd Hāshī 'Olhaye).

We intend to provide further details surrounding their assassination in an upcoming translation of a letter penned by Abū Yūsuf al-Gharīb entitled: *Do You Kill a Man Because He Says: 'My Lord is Allah'?*

“Verily, I am the Naked Warner”

An Open Letter to: Our Leader and Shaykh, Dr. Ayman adh-Dhawāhirī
From: Abū Bakr az-Zaylaī

An Apology:

We absolutely regret to address you through this public medium, but this is the means of one who is compelled, and if we had a private medium we wouldn't need (to resort) to this. Keeping in mind that what we mention is nothing but the glimpse of a complaint informing of the calamity we suffer from. We wait for you to give us the opportunity to deliver the truth you, supported by evidences and testimonies through the mediums that you see fit.

All praise is due to Allāh for the blessing of Islām.

All praise is due to Allāh for the blessing of Īmān (faith).

All praise is due to Allāh for the blessing of the Sunnah (prophetic traditions).

All praise is due to Allāh for the blessing of da'wah (inviting to Islam).

All praise is due to Allāh for the blessing of hisbah (enjoining good and forbidding evil).

All praise is due to Allāh for the blessing of Jihād.

All praise is due to Allāh for the blessing of renewing and reviving the religion after its (almost) effacement.

He ﷺ said:

«So stand you firm and straight as you are commanded and who turn in repentance (unto Allah) with you, and transgress not. Verily, He is All-Seer of what you do. And incline not toward those who do wrong, lest the Fire should touch you, and you have no protectors other than Allah, nor you would then be helped»¹

And prayers and peace be upon the Prophet of Battles, the Prophet of Mercy, who said:

«Verily, I am the naked warner»²

To proceed:

Jābir bin 'Abdillāh narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said to Ka'b bin 'Ujrah ؓ:

«May Allah grant you refuge from the leadership of the foolish. »

He [Ka'b] said: "And what is the leadership of the foolish?"

¹ Sūrat Hūd; 11:112-113

² Bukhārī & Muslim

He  responded:

«Leaders who will come after me who will not abide by my guidance nor adhere to my way. Whosoever affirms their lies and aids them in their oppression, they're not from me and I'm not from them, and they won't reach my pond. Whosoever doesn't affirm their lies and neither aids them in their oppression, they're from me and I'm from them, and they will reach my pond.»³

Why this address?

- Because I am the naked warner, "...and if the man wishes the warn and notify his people of that which necessitates fear, he removes his clothing and he gestures towards them with it if he's far from them, to inform them of what has overtaken them. This is mostly done by the one who's their vanguard and overseer."⁴
- Because I felt the responsibility of conveying this complaint to you on behalf of the silent majority; from the various sections of mujāhidīn and the rest of the Muslims, from the respected people of the land and those of intellect, from the scholars and callers to Islam, who were unable to have their voices reach you.
- Because for years we have knocked on the various doors of rectifying the affairs and reforming the way, and before the ship sank the voices of the reformers cried: "save yourselves, save yourselves" and a party of them still call for accountability of the oppressor and returning the usurped rights.
- Because there were plenty of chances, that cannot be enumerated, for the leader (Abū Zubayr Godane) to rectify, repent, and reform. Yet we see that the situation worsens and nothing looms on the horizon. No promise of success and no riddance of calamity.
- Because when a shar'īah court was formed to settle the internal disputes with the leader (Abū Zubayr Godane) the verdicts were as if blown away by the wind, thereby closing all ways of advising in private.⁵
- Because if we at one point in time used to fear the stealing of the fruits of the Jihād by external hands, we sense a reality today that reveals that internal deviation could lead to the fruits of establishment falling into the abyss of loss, and the help of Allāh is sought [against that].
- Because we are a people of practical experience and if today we have missed the opportunity of establishment, expanding the Jihād and building the Islamic state, we haven't - praise be to Allāh - lost the understanding of (our) current stage and the understanding of the problem, we ask Allāh to take us out from it without any harm.

³ Reported by Ahmad in his *Musnad* and classified authentic by al-Albanī in *Sahīhut-Targheeb Wat-Tarhīb*, no.

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⁴ *Sharhun-Nawawī 'Alā Muslim*, 15/48

⁵ The dispute between the leader of ash-Shabāb and others belonging to the movement was brought to ash-Shabāb's shar'īah court and the judge az-Zubayr al-Muhājir ruled against the leader Abū Zubayr Godane, ruling that he was to be removed from office. Abū Zubayr Godane then dismantled the court and ignored the ruling. This is what is being referred to.

Throughout our ordeal were blessings and bitter lessons which we have learnt through the blood of our martyrs and the suffering of our people which the mujāhidīn should be exhorted by.

- Because our Jihād in Somalia was the abode of hope for many of the weak and a flame that lit the path for Muslims, hence we do not want it to diminish due to our conduct and Islām will not be attacked from our side, so O Allāh do not let anyone delight at our grief.
- Because we were partners in Jihad and were never partners in oppression.

Allāh ﷻ said:

«...Help you one another in righteousness and piety; but do not help one another in sin and transgression... »⁶

Restoring the rights of the oppressed from the oppressor is an obligation bound by sharī'ah.

- Because our hope in Allāh is great and the opportunity for rectification and reforming the path is available, and Allāh is the Guide to the straight path.

Before the address:

- The blessings of Allāh poured over us when we were upright, but when we became crooked then the decree of Allāh regarding the nations overtook us, this principle of Allāh [is constant and] spares no one and never differs.

Hence in proportion to that which we had belittled of religious teachings was the humiliation that befell us, and in equal measure to our conduct regarding society and dealing with the people in harshness and alienation was the [reciprocal] distancing and departing (of people) from our ranks that befell us. And in this situation private advising between ourselves was of no benefit and this lethal hemorrhaging [of the people and their trust] continued amongst us.

The bitter result was that we lost most of our territory and the sympathy of our protective people, we ask Allāh to forgive our sins and transgressions in keeping our duty to Him.

- We witnessed noteworthy setbacks regarding the gains of the mujahidīn. For the last four years ten provinces were under the administration and control of the (ash-Shabāb) movement. Alongside the huge human resources and the sympathy of our Muslim population Allah further favored us with unprecedented tribal support. The setbacks that later occurred is due to what we [ourselves] have earned.

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Sūrat al-Mā'idah; 5:2

Allāh ﷻ said:

«And whatever of misfortune befalls you, it is because of what your hands have earned. And He pardons much»⁷

- The spirit of the Jihād became confined and the aptitudes of progress and production were shattered. This came after the dismissal of many of the leaders of Jihād, distancing the scholars from the field of work and the sidelining those with resources and capability, thus the wheel [of progress] that had been moving [steadily] forward began to retreat, moving backward.
- Muslim reported in his saḥīḥ collection from Ā'ith bin 'Amr ﷺ, who was one of the companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, that he entered upon 'Ubaydillāh bin Ziyād and said:

"O my son, I have heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ say:

«The worst of guardians are *al-hutamah*, so beware of being one of them.»

An-Nawawī in his explanation (of the term *al-hutamah*) said:

"He is the one who is cruel with his subjects, he is not lenient towards them in regards to their markets, pastures, water sources and similar things. Rather he overcrowds them thereby harming them and crushing them."

- Those in the blossom of their youth flocked to us, they were then known by the battlefields and their guarding of the frontiers, men who were **«...forceful against the disbelievers, merciful among themselves. ... »⁸**

But despotism - may Allāh not bless it - divided their unity, dissipated their hopes, destroyed their brotherhood and scattered them into parties; oppressing one another and acclimating them to blind following (to obey leaders without thought).

As for the one who rejects oppression and refuses humiliation, then he suffers from restrictions and is prevented from the most basic rights of life, they are left [in such dire circumstances that they retreat] into the wilderness with the beasts, to face a slow death, alone.

Everyone awaits the solution or strives towards it, however the bitter truth strikes when it becomes apparent after years, and people realize that all means to reaching a solution have been prohibited. No reform, no pardon, and no trial. And so, the problems began with us and did not end, but rather continued and exacerbated.

⁷ Surat Ash-Shura; 26:30

⁸ Sūrat al-Fath; 48:29

[Instead of making reparations] an alternate solution [is implemented by ash-Shabāb, and that is] to tighten the noose around the victim discreetly, until the matter gets out of hand, making controlling (the situation) harder, until the world hears the beginning of a ferocious confrontation on social media, where Twitter carries the details to all.

The root of the tragedy:

Our esteemed leader,

- Part of your teachings and advices in your message responding to the pledge of allegiance (by Abū Zubayr Godane to Dr. Ayman) was to spread *shūra* (seeking counsel) and to develop it into a habit, a characteristic and a trait, thus you - may Allāh protect and take care of you - said:

*"I advise my brothers to spread justice and *shūra* (seeking counsel) between all factions of the Islamic nation until it becomes for them a habit, a characteristic and a trait."*⁹

However, with regret, our exclusive affairs and the affairs of the country in general are led in an individualistic way, not an Islamic way, its led in an isolated way, not a consultative way.

Our administration, regretfully, is totalitarian, which makes it difficult for it to accept sincere advice. It controls the capacity of the nation and directs it according to its desires, without fearing any following up or accountability.

Allāh ﷻ said:

«And by the Mercy of Allāh, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you; so pass over (their faults), and ask (Allāh's) Forgiveness for them; and consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allāh, certainly, Allāh loves those who put their trust (in Him) »¹⁰

Abu Bakr at-Tartūsi said:

*"From among the most ugliest of descriptions men can be described with, be they kings or commoners, is to be tyrannical regarding his opinion and abandoning counselling"*¹¹

- Just as the scout does not lie to his people, we find no description more applicable of what we go through like the words of shaykh Usāmah:

"...Thus, the weakness of comprehension that we find amongst the sons of this nation, which results from the misleading culture that's spread by the rulers for many decades, is the nation's greatest catastrophe and all other catastrophes of the nation are just fruits from its bitter fruits.

⁹ The Bay'ah of Abū Zubayr to Dr. Ayman: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CfICGpmjaN8>

The advice of Dr. Ayman is from 11:02 to 11:13

¹⁰ Sūrat Āl-'Imrān; 3:157

¹¹ *Sirājul-Mulūk*, p. 94

The culture of humiliation, subservience, submissiveness, the consecration of absolute obedience to the rulers - and this a form of worship to them - and conceding to them the most important religious and worldly rights, making values, principles and personalities circle around their orbit, is what leads the human being to lose his sense of humanity and causes him to run after the ruler and his wishes, without any sense or insight.

Thus, he becomes an '*imma'ah*¹²; if the people do good he does good and if they commit evil he commits evil, making him a piece of merchandise which the rulers do with it whatever they want.

And those are the victims of oppression and tyranny in our lands, who have been brought out by the rulers to chant their names and stand with them in their trenches.

The rulers rushed to cause the people to strip themselves from their most important God given rights, they neutralized the intellect of the nation, sidelined its role in important public affairs with the collaborated efforts of state religious institutions and media outlets to give him a painting of legitimacy.

They (state religious institutions and media outlets) bewitched the eyes, the will and the intellect of the people.

They promoted the idolatry of the rulers, they established it (the idolatry) falsely in the name of the religion, likewise in the name of the country, so it may be respected by the people and implanted in them, so that it may be sanctified by the elderly, and the young weren't saved from it, who are a trust placed over our necks as they were born on the *fitrah*¹³.

They assassinated their *fitrah* without any conscience or mercy, and thus the old became senescent on this (culture) and the young grew up on it."¹⁴

And on our part, how bitter and sorry do we feel that our reality matches that described by the martyred leader, with slight differences of course.

- Operations take place which harms to Islam are much more than their benefits, rather due to some of them we have lost popular and tribal support that are not to be taken lightly.

This is then treated by staying silent about it, even in official circles, and the one who asks about them, insists about an inquiry or an estimate of casualties, then he becomes the doubtful suspect and there's no power or might except with Allah.

¹² A feeble minded follower, in reference to a term used in a hadith

¹³ The natural state every human is born in believing in monotheism of Allāh

¹⁴ "*Speech of the Martyr of Islām*": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v6fonv7SAjM>

As for the instructions of the leadership [above us in the al-Qā'idah chain of command], represented by shaykh 'Atiyyatillāh, regarding keeping operations in check, distancing them from mosques and forming a special trusted committee consisting of students of knowledge and trusted military leaders to supervise the various operations and so forth, [the implementation of] these teachings are all absent from our reality and Allāh's aid is sought.

- As for the greatest catastrophe and the biggest disaster, it is inciting the young mujāhidīn of sound *fitrah* against their brothers from amongst the scholars of the movement and some of its leaders who proclaim the word of truth, in some cases it has reached the extent of threats of extermination.

How can any of the mujāhidīn proceed to execute such orders, while obeying the human being in regards to the disobedience of Allāh?

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنه said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

«The believer remains at liberty regarding his religion as long as he doesn't spill unlawful blood.»¹⁵

The issue is not to merely «listen and obey»¹⁶, rather «obedience is only in righteousness»¹⁷.

Shaykh Atiyyatullāh said:

"It is upon the leadership of the mujāhidīn everywhere to concern themselves with educating their brothers the mujāhidīn, generally, and the martyrdom seekers particularly, to give them complete sincere advice and to acquaint them, to a level of complete satisfaction, in regards to fiqh (jurisprudence) that is necessary for a mujāhid about to embark on such operations, including sincerity towards Allah, to fully dedicate himself to the obedience of Allāh by sacrificing his soul to raise the word of Allah, to strengthen the religion, to repel the disbelieving enemy who corrupts both the religion and worldly affairs.

So he should not embark towards an unclear or doubtful target, or a place differed upon (its permissibility) which will cause dispute and quarrel. He should not embark except to where it is confirmed 100% that the target is legally permissible, with which he [the one executing the operation] feels at complete ease and is sure that the objective of the operation is the pleasure of Allāh.

It is incumbent on the leadership of the mujāhidīn to be sincere towards the seekers of martyrdom in regards to this. They should be extremely wary of deceiving them or sending them to doubtful or unclear targets, for this is not from sincerity.

¹⁵ Bukhāri

¹⁶ «السَّمْعُ وَالطَّاعَةُ عَلَى الْمَرْءِ الْمُسْلِمِ فِيمَا أَحَبَّ وَكَرِهَ، مَا لَمْ يُؤْمَرْ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ، فَإِذَا أُمِرَ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ فَلَا سَمْعَ وَلَا طَاعَةَ»

The phrase 'listen and obey' is found in many ahādith the above wording is from the Hadith of 'Abdillāh ibn 'Umar as collected in the Sunan of Abī Dāwūd.

¹⁷ «... الطَّاعَةُ فِي الْمَعْرُوفِ»

This statement of the Prophet ﷺ is from the hadīth found in Bukhāri & Muslim regarding the people ordered by their leader to enter a fire.

Likewise, if the martyrdom seeker himself, who proceeds towards such targets without verification, without insight, then he is sinful and blameworthy, Allah will hold him to account and punish him instead of attaining martyrdom, and who of us is pleased with that? And many are those slain from the two ranks whom Allah knows best their intention, and many are those who seek good yet reach it not."¹⁸

- It has been apparent to us for a while that there were religious deviations ongoing in the leader's (Abū Zubayr Godane) inner circles, among those whom he brings near while [at the same time] distancing them from the scholars, those whose nurturing he directly oversees.

As part of our role we brought this to his attention, advised him and reminded him privately. However, affairs were being directed opposite of our advice, so the circle of deviation spread and in secretive manners, and from amongst the apparent signs of these deviations are:

- Extremism in regards to obeying the leader; and it is today most similar to what is known as the "Levantine obedience", which Shaykhul Isām ibn Taymyyah mentioned about the followers of the Umayyads, who held as part of their belief:

"That Allah won't hold them to account regarding their obedience to the leader [without limitations], rather it is obligatory upon them to obey the leader in everything and (the belief that) Allah ordered them to do so... Thus we find in the speech of many of their heads the orders to absolutely obey the one charged with authority [unconditionally] and that one who obeys him has obeyed Allah, because of this their example was set forth, the Levantine obedience"¹⁹

- Worse than (all of) that is how they treat the most important issue of this era!

Its the first issue pertaining to tawhīd (exclusively worshipping Allāh).

It is the issue because of which scholars were executed by the ropes of the gallows.

It is the issue because of which loved ones have disappeared in prisons for many years.

It is the issue because of which the market of Jihād was opened and pure blood of the best youth of this nation was spilled.

The issue which returned to the nation its security, faith, unity, brotherhood, honor, glory, dignity and leadership.

It is the issue of ruling by what Allāh has sent down.

I say, this issue is weakened by tyranny, its flesh is eaten by arrogance, its bones are corroded by the disease of procrastination.

If it isn't rescued today, then it will be wiped away by the stubbornness of the one holding the reins, it's strength will be weakened by negligence and the length of forgetfulness. And it's [legal] cases will erode due to accumulation [and neglect] as time goes on.

¹⁸ *Venerating the Sanctity of Muslim Blood*, speech by 'Atiyyatillāh al-Lībī:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPrDUHAzGRY>

¹⁹ *Minhājus-Sunnah*, 6/43 by Ibn Taymiyyah

Likewise, it is spoiled and maligned by ambiguity and secrecy, and Allah's aid is sought.

- Justice is as the scholars mentioned:

"If its comprehensive, then it's one of the maxims of this life and that of the religion, both of which can have no arrangement except by it, there can be no uprightness in both without it. It's the cause for harmony and incentive for obedience. Through it the land flourishes, wealth builds up, livestock increases and the authority feels safe. Nothing is swifter in destroying the land or spoiling the conscience of the creation than injustice and oppression. Because it doesn't stop at a limit nor does it end at an objective."²⁰

Our judicial system divides into two:

A judicial system in the administrated provinces, but this isn't the place to discuss it.

A judicial system which comes directly under the leader which is conducted in complete secrecy. Rather it serves as a stick in the hand of the leader and a sword unleashed on the necks of the population, through which the foundations of justice are lost.

As for the judge responsible for this type of judging, most of the time he's conveying the messages of the leader (through his verdicts).

Ibn Abī Jamrah said:

*"As for the one who doesn't judge except by what the one who appointed him wants, then he isn't really judge, he fits more the description of the carrier of a message."*²¹

Many complain of this type of judging, but it's to no avail. If a party with good intention initiates opening the door of rectification, the door is closed in their face. And if their complaints are raised, they don't hear except a lowly echo and an eerie silence. Is this how the world is to be led?

And if the case pertains to blood, honor or wealth it gets marginalized and procrastinated until its forgotten, so where is the protection of the religion?

If the request of ending disputes with the leader, by returning to the Qur'ān and Sunnah, cannot find its way to conciliation and court, then what is the meaning of ruling by sharī'ah?

And if the verdicts of the court are not executed then what is the point of [claiming] submission and surrender to the Lord of the heavens and earth?

²⁰ *Ad-Durarus-Saniyyah Fil Ajwibatin-Najdiyyah*, 9/306

²¹ *Tabsiratul-Ahkām Fi Usūlil-Aqdhiyati Wa Minhājil-Ahkām*, 1/47

How many complaints of the Muslims were not listened to! How many lawsuits filed by the muhajirīn (immigrants) were sidelined, or were raised yet didn't find their way to court! And to Allah we complain.

*If the leader and his two companions oppress ** And the judge compromises in his judging
Then woe, and woe and then woe ** To the judge on earth from The Judge of the Heavens*

- The prisons belonging to the (ash-Shabāb) movement.

What will make you realize what the prisons belonging to the (ash-Shabāb) movement are?

There are several types of prisons the movement administrates, like the public prisons which come under the provincial administrations, but we won't talk about those.

There are however several types of secret prisons which come under the leader (directly).

It isn't allowed for commanders to visit them nor is it allowed for the scholars of the mujahidīn to monitor them, forget about the families of those imprisoned.

The one inside them goes missing and the one who comes out from them is a newborn, and [until now] we still deal with the bitterness of its effects.

The summary of what takes place in them from oppression and violation of the rights of the "suspects" - whose crimes have not been proven and nor tried, even in the secret courts - are things which turn children grey headed due to their horrendous nature.

The majority of scholars and intellectuals have clearly called for the closure of secret prisons or to open their doors in order to be monitored by the eyes of sharī'ah.

They insisted that this happen immediately, however as the years passed they did not find an answer, rather as a matter of fact the secret prisons worsened and increased in secrecy.

Due to this the people despaired of presenting any complaint to the leader regarding the violated rights of the victims, just as the reformers despaired before them from delivering any advice or opinion to him about what goes on in the secret solitary dungeons.

No doubt members of the movement are bothered by those prisons, which were facilitated while they were heedless and far away from their eyes, they are not aware of the extent of the atrocities inmates suffer from.

All the doors are closed, all the paths to rectification are obstructed, the leader left us no choice but to accept the reality of the situation and to work together despite the horror and horridness.

It comes as no surprise that we hear people say (about us):

"They used not to forbid one another from evil which they committed. Vile indeed was what they used to do"²²

Or that some of them would assume that we are accomplices with the leader in his wrongdoing. And this is what no Muslim would accept, let alone a mujāhid.

Allāh ﷻ said:

«No person earns any (sin) except against himself, and no bearer of burdens shall bear the burden of another.»²³

- Using dirty tactics and the policy of coercion against all who attempt to advise and reform, or insist on speaking the word of truth.

One might notice that the leader puts all sorts of pressure on individuals such as spreading rumors and character assassination to break their will or to buy their loyalty.

Or he might pour wealth on some individuals while starving others to subdue them.

If squandering the assets and capacities of our nation has become a necessary policy of the leader, then will you not ask him about our "men" who are the "capital" of the Jihad and its backbone?

'Umar bin al-Khattāb رضي الله عنه said:

"But I wish that I had this room full of men like Abū 'Ubaydah bin al-Jarrāh, Mu'āth bin Jabal and Huthayfah bin al-Yamān so that I would use them in obedience to Allāh."²⁴

However, amongst us men have no value, for the people of wisdom and the cadre consisting of people of experience and precedence from amongst the muhajirīn and ansar (the people who shelter the immigrants) have "malfunctioned", in every sense of the word.

Their energy is wasted, if they're missing they're not looked for and if present they're not asked. They've become like al-Kawākibī said:

"Indolent and inert, confused not knowing how spend his time and hours, with his days and years passing, as if eager to reach the end of his lifespan so that he can be hidden underneath the dirt."²⁵

- Distancing the scholars from positions of influence such as teaching, preaching and preventing some from authoring and writing, to the extent that recently some of the best preachers of the mujahidīn were prevented from giving lessons for no reason.

²² Sūrat Al-Mā'idah; 5:79

²³ Sūrat Al-An'ām; 6:164

²⁴ *Hilyatul 'Awiliyā* by Abu Nu'aym al-Asbahānī 1/102 & *al-Mustadrak* by al-Hākim 3/262

²⁵ See *Tabā'i'ul-Istibdād*

Allāh ﷻ said:

«And who is better than he who invites to Allāh»²⁶

Al-Hasan al-Basrī would say: *"This is the beloved of Allāh, this is the one close to Allāh, the position of inviting to Allāh is the best position of the slave."*²⁷

- As for knowledge amongst us, it is sidelined and restricted.

The scholars are rendered useless except those exempted by the leader. al-Kawākibī said in his book *Tabā'iul-Istibdād*:

"There's a constant war and chase between tyranny and knowledge. The scholars seek to enlighten minds while the tyrant exerts effort to extinguish it. Both parties seek to attract the commoners, and who are the commoners?"

They are those if ignorant are fearful, and if they are fearful they submit... In summary tyranny and knowledge are two opposites wrestling one another, thus every tyrannical administration exerts its effort in extinguishing the light of knowledge and restricting the subjects in a state of ignorance, whereas the scholars and the wise ones who sometimes grow (like a plant) on the narrow rocks of tyranny exert their effort in enlightening the minds of people. Most of the time the men of tyranny chase the people of knowledge and inflict harm on them."

- The leader has slacked from spreading the Jihād and making its flame reach to our persecuted brothers in Ethiopia, Kenya and elsewhere, despite this, muhajirīn (immigrant) brothers of various ages and expertise responded and arrived to the Somali front, individually and in flocks. We did not receive their leaders well nor did we benefit from their cadres.

Rather they were treated as strangers (in an unwelcoming manner), with them fleeing the country as a result, like Shaykh Aboud Rogo who was from the most prominent preachers of Kenya. He was killed in cold blood in Mombasa while with his family (after fleeing Somalia) and the likes of him are many.

And to clarify, the millions of Muslims in those countries were not in need for a huge army to come to them from Somalia, rather some limited effort was enough to light the fire of Jihād in the area with the help of Allah.

- As for the suffering of the remaining muhajirīn with us, volumes can be written about them, sad stories and bitter events, concealed regrets and a people overpowered.

How many men akin to mountains, their biographies are hidden and the stories of their heroism [and sacrifice] are folded and not narrated. If light isn't shed on these in our temporary life, Allāh will make them apparent on the Day of Judgement, so there is no rush.

²⁶ Sūrat Fussilat; 41:33

²⁷ *Miftāh Dārus-Sa'ādah* by Ibnul-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah; 1/291

Allāh ﷻ said:

«Consider not that Allāh is unaware of that which the oppressors do, but He gives respite up to a day when the eye will stare in horror»²⁸

- Our administration is totally individualistic and the way it is administrated does not conform to Islamic politics. Take shūra (seeking counsel), for example, if the leader remembers it then it's a blessing and a mercy from him, otherwise there's no problem with it, because tyranny is seen as wisdom and determination.

Huthayfah bin al-Yamān ﷺ said:

"You shall remain upon good as long as you aren't ruled by leaders who believe you have no rights unless they desire."²⁹

Because of this we suffer from vapidity in our administration on both a national level and as a movement to a very bad degree.

Our organizational structure changes depending on the desire and wishes of the leader, there are no conditions stipulated by the Muslims that restrain him nor any agreements with the mujahidīn that constrain him.

One of the latest things the leader (Abū Zubayr Godane) did was dismissing the head of the 'ahlul hal wal-'aqd council in a secretive manner and without any known legitimate reasons. And that was the equivalent of dismantling whatever remained of administering the movement as a group.

To clarify, this council was merely a label, as it lacked qualified men to begin with and it never played its respective role. This was due to its belittlement and the various means that were utilized to weaken it. Just like birds of the same feathers flock together; similarly, people resemble one another in terms of ruling and politics.

The Prophet ﷺ mentioned to us some of the natures of human beings when he ﷺ said:

«When the sons of Abul 'Ās reach thirty men, they'll take the slaves of Allāh as *khawala* (خولا), the book of Allah as *daghala* (دغلا) and the wealth of Allah as *duwala*. (دولا)»³⁰

The meaning of «taking the slaves of Allah as *khawala*» is to enslave them and use them. The meaning of taking «Allah's book as *daghala*» means they will deceive the people thereby. The origin of *daghala* is a coiled tree where people of corruption hide. It is also used in the sense of corrupting something. Ibn Mandhūr said: "*dhaghl* is every place where assassination is feared." The meaning of «taking the wealth of Allah as *duwala*»: *duwala* is the plural form of *dulah*, and that is wealth that circulates, so it

²⁸ Sūrat Ibrāhīm; 14:42

²⁹ Reported by al-Hākim who classed it authentic and ath-Thahabī agreed with him

³⁰ Ahmad & al-Hākim, classified as authentic by al-Albāni in *Sahīhul Jāmi'* no. 419

will reach some while it won't reach others. It is also said that the meaning of it is wealth that circulates amongst the rich with nothing reaching the poor.³¹

- The majority of individuals on the international terror list who are wanted by the USA, Europe and neighboring countries are the very same people hunted, detained, expelled or marginalized by the ash-Shabāb movement, except for a few. So look at how the catastrophes accumulated from all angles!
- Even the language complains and demands to have its rights back, (in our reality) the name of a thing doesn't necessarily reflect what it was named for.

For example:

The 'guest house' for the muhajirīn is more of "comfortable" prison or house arrest, with no connotation of being a "guest".

As for the "training camp", at times the purpose of it is to prevent the brother from any work and limit his movement in general.

As for the "front line", which (from a religious perspective) is from among the best places, it is used by the movement's chief judge as disciplinary punishment accompanied by hard labor, turning it into a prison.

Advising in private is understood as "splitting the ranks" and "exiting the realm of obedience".

Rejecting the oppression (in secret or public and advising in letters or speech) of the leader against the Muslim population and the mujāhidīn is understood by some as an armed revolt against the "commander of the believers" and "departing the main body of the Muslims".

- Finally, Shaykhul Islām ibn Taymiyyah said in his book *Iqtidhā' us-Siraatil Mustaqīm*:

"The majority of leaders invented oppressive policies such as taking wealth that isn't permissible to be taken and unlawful punishments inflicted because of (certain) actions; it is because they exceeded in what was legislated from enjoining the good and prohibiting the evil.

For if they took what was permitted to be taken, and placed it where it was permitted to be placed, seeking thereby the establishment of Allāh's religion, not for the sake of their leadership, while establishing the legislated *hudūd* (penal code) on the noble and the humble [alike], those near and those far, seeking thereby the justice that Allah commanded, they would not be in need of innovated taxes and oppressive punishments, nor would they be in need of protection from the slaves and the enslaved, like the rightly guided Caliphs, 'Umar bin 'Abdil'Azīz and some of the continental leaders."

Our shaykh and leader, now there remains no more time for waiting, nor space for patience, so hurry! Hurry!

³¹ See *Lisānul 'Arab, an-Nihāyah fī Gharīb al-Hadīth* and *Tafsīrul Aalūsi*

Things have reached a stage where vague talk is of no benefit, we cannot under any circumstances dispel our worries and wait for the catastrophes that linger in the horizon. We're heading towards a dark tunnel, with none but Allāh knowing what it has hidden, and Allāh's aid is sought and upon him we place our reliance.

The solution is what we hope that Allāh guides you to, however the situation is in need of urgent and direct following up, and that according to our opinion is:

Immediate interference from your end which entails:

- That the issue does not head towards the spilling of the blood of the mujāhidīn from the muhajirīn or ansār.
- That no revenge is taken, by performing despotic arrests, rather all those held oppressively should be released.
- Looking at the verdicts of the shari'ah courts regarding settling the disputes with the leader.
- To listen to all sides, the muhajirīn and ansār, the scholars, influential figures of the land and the members of the *ahlul hall wal 'aqd* council.

Lastly our shaykh and leader,

I am the naked warner. What I fear the most is losing the fruits of the Jihād, the factors of establishment, destroying the hopes of the nation and entering the vortex of a bloody struggle, similar to the events in Algeria during the days of Abu 'AbdirRahmān Amīn and those after him.

The *fitnah* (tribulation) has lifted its mask and removed its inhibition, we ask Allāh to save us from it.

We await you impatiently, and until any further communication our days are left to thoughts and our nights to sleeplessness.

O Allāh we disassociate ourselves from oppressing the innocent and we seek refuge in you that our griefs be celebrated.

And prayers and peace be upon our prophet Muhammad, his family and companions.
And all praise is due to Allah.

Abū Bakr az-Zayla'ī
21 Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1434 AH