

Bin Ladin Message Urges Islamic Factions To Unite, Fight 'External' Enemy

Osama bin Laden

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[Please note: Images may have been removed from this document. Page numbers have been added.]

London Al-Sharq al-Awsat (Internet Version-WWW) in Arabic 19 Jan 03

[Report by Muhammad al-Shafi'i in London: "New Message From Bin Ladin Justifies Mistakes of Al-Qa'ida Leaders, Attacks 'Secularist Movements', and Calls for Unity of Islamic Factions" Correction: added Urgent tag]

[FBIS Translated Text] Al-Sharq al-Awsat obtained yesterday a new message prepared by the "Islamic Studies and Research Center" in Pakistan, the main mouthpiece for Al-Qa'ida organization. The message is titled "Islamic Action Between Causes of Consensus and Advocates of Disagreement" [al-amal al-islami bayn dawa'i al-ijtima wa du'at al-niza]. The foreword was written by Usama Bin Ladin, the leader of the secret organization whom Washington is hunting down as the main defendant in the September 2001 terrorist attacks on Washington and New York. The Islamic Studies and Research Center reported exclusively during the past months Al-Qa'ida's operations, most notably the Mombassa operation in Kenya, the Faylaka operation in Kuwait, and the attack on the French oil tanker Limburg in Yemen's waters last October.

Bin Ladin says in a new message that fundamentalist sources in London say was written only few weeks ago: "It is the extent of differences and disunity among Muslims in general and those working for Islam in particular that the Muslim observes today which is surprising and bewildering. This dangerous phenomenon has almost become the only point of consensus and agreement between the various Islamic action factions in the arena."

Bin Ladin adds in the 26-page message: "The importance of the message does not lie only in its contents but also in its source. It comes from the depth of the jihadist tendency inside the blessed Islamic awakening. It expresses a broad sector inside this tendency, which used to be and is still described as the proudest of its views on disputed issues among the Islamic tendencies." He did not talk about or touch upon the other jihadist or Islamic tendencies that disagree with Al-Qa'ida's thinking.

He hastens to add however: "If the feeling that disunity and differences are dangerous and unity and agreement are important has prompted this important party in the cause to raise it within this universal and unifying framework, then it is with greater reason that the other parties should deal positively with this proposal."

The Al-Qa'ida leader goes on to say: "The message we are presenting today falls within the framework of the commendable efforts that are closing an important gap in this matter. The message sets forth the most important evidence from the Holy

Book, the Sunna, and the sayings of the nation's ulemas concerning the need for unity and consensus and renunciation of disunity and differences and for concentrating on the effects and damages that differences in views cause."

He then reviews the Islamic situation and the splits, differences, disunity, and disagreements in which it is living. According to Bin Ladin, the message underlines the need for adhering to the course followed by the people of the Sunna and for a set of shari'ah rules that govern the relationship between Muslims and those working for Islam so as to protect their Islamic brotherhood even if they hold different scholastic views and practical interpretations.

The fundamentalist sources in London disclosed that this is the first time that Bin Ladin affiliates himself openly to the jihadist tendency. In the past, he spoke about jihad as a religious duty, that is as an absolute, but now affiliates himself to a specific tendency with ideological precepts and practices that distinguish it from the other Islamic tendencies.

"The New Crusade", Prepared by Al-Qa'ida on a CD

Bin Ladin's message asks when will Muslims wake up from the long slumber and deep sleep? When will they rise to carry out serious action for their religion and call? When will they distinguish between their friend and their enemy? When will they point their arrows, with which they are fighting each other, at their external enemy that is oppressing their nation, looting and robbing its resources and wealth?

On his part, Libyan Islamist Nu'man Bin-Uthman, the expert in fundamentalist movements, said in a telephone contact with Al-Sharq al-Awsat that this latest message is not the only one prepared by Al-Qa'ida's Political Bureau. There is another 160-page book titled "The New Crusade" that is on CD and its foreword contains a dedication to the US Congress.

There is also the "Allegiance and Disavowal" book by Ayman al-Zawahiri, leader of the Egyptian Jihad Organization and Bin Ladin's right-hand man. This book can be found on the Islamic Studies and Research Center's Internet website. Al-Zawahiri had earlier written "Knights under the Prophet's Banner" book, which Al-Sharq al-Awsat published last year as part of his recollections about some contemporary leaders of the Islamic movements.

The Libyan Islamist said the purpose behind the publication of these fundamentalists' studies is an Al-Qa'ida attempt to restore the conceptual structure of the jihadist tendency movement. He pointed out that "The New Crusade" book defines Al-Qa'ida's priorities in the operations against US targets and is dedicated to the US Congress.

He asserted that Bin Ladin's new message comes at the right time because it presents through its shari'ah-based evidence and documentation a clear call to renounce the differences between the fundamentalists, no matter how profound they are, and to unite the ranks against the external enemy.

He explained that all Al-Qa'ida's recent books agree on the need to stand by the believers and to be hostile to the infidel, who are in particular the United States and Israel; that is, to concentrate on the "violent struggle between the forces of unbelief, tyranny, and arrogance and the Muslim nation and its jihad vanguard and which reached its peak with the New York and Washington conquests."

In reply to an Al-Sharq al-Awsat question about the timing of publishing Bin Ladin's message, the Libyan Islamist answered that he is still alive and said: "Bin Ladin's death or arrest is something that cannot be kept secret. The man does not live alone but is hiding among a group of Islamists who are in charge of protecting him." He added: Such a thing cannot be kept secret, especially in the Afghan milieu that is known to be unable to keep a secret. The Arab Aghans who took part in the jihad against the Russians used to joke and mock this to the point where they said that if you wanted the secret of the last Arab Afghans' operation, then go to the Afghan cook at the front and he would tell you all the details.

Bin Ladin's message touches on the Muslims' differences and disunity and says these are not anymore something inherited from the old negative legacy, which the Muslims inherited from the past eras and the direct occupation ones, but they are being entrenched and deepened in the Islamic awakening's reality by those working for Islam who are rearing the generations on these differences and planting in their minds in a practical way the idea that action according to them is part of the rules of allegiance and disagreement. The message adds: "In addition to being disobedience to Allah the Almighty, disunity and differences are the cause of betrayal, defeat, and failure."

Disunity and Differences

About the reality in the Islamic arena and the disunity and differences it is living in, Bin Ladin's message says: "Despite what Islam and its people are suffering from at the hands of their enemies the secularist movements, despotic governments, and infidel nations, and despite the calamities from which the nation is suffering, foremost of them the desecration and occupation of its holy places, the occupation of territories, and the violation of honor, despite all this and that, the Muslims are still wholly engaged in violent differences, blazing feuds, and issues and matters that are not part of the rules of religion or the consensus where differences are not permitted."

The message addresses sharp criticisms "to the enemies who are waging an intellectual campaign of disinformation parallel to the military crusade in an endeavor to patch up the worn-out reality." Touching on the secularists, it says: "Tongues very often seek to harm the propagators, ulema, and seekers of knowledge who hold their heads high because truth is on their side at a time when the heads of the lowly bend before the storm of falsehood, betray the trust of the truth, and offer it in the street of inducement and intimidation. The tongues that seek to harm the ulema are quite often the same ones that praise and extol the actions of the despotic and other enemies of Islam and Muslims who have declared war on Allah and fought His holy men and supported His enemies." The message then goes on to justify the mistakes of the organization's

leaders and downplay their consequences. It says under the headline "A Mistake Is Assessed Proportionately" that the human being is by nature liable to make mistakes and to err. This being so and as all the virtuous and ulema are liable too, rules ought to be laid down that protect their dignity from being destroyed and their status from being wrecked for some mistake they make." It adds: "The crucial factor is not a person's mistakes but his good deeds and righteousness. His status is not wrecked because of an accidental mistake, from which no one is infallible."

There is contradiction in the message that ignores the mistakes of Al-Qa'ida's leaders and demands that rules be laid down to protect its ulema's dignity while at the same time not ignoring the mistakes of those who have moved to the camp of tyranny and falsehood and who have devoted themselves to fight the truth and its upholders.

The message urges the loyal youth to mobilize their efforts for the battle that has not finished yet by saying: "The situation that Muslims are living in today requires the mobilization of everyone who belongs to this religion and the utilization of his resources and efforts in the battle that Islam is fighting against the crusaders' alliance, which has bared its teeth and revealed its true objectives from fighting Islam and Muslims, and is not content anymore with what its agents in the region are doing."

[Description of Source: London Al-Sharq al-Awsat (Internet Version-WWW) in Arabic -- Influential Saudi-owned London daily providing independent coverage of Arab and international issues; editorials reflect official Saudi views on foreign policy]

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Compilation of Usama Bin Ladin Statements 1994-January 2004

FBIS Report

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https://wikileaks.org/wiki/CIA_FBIS:_Usama_bin_Laden_Statements_1994-2004