

FYI--Al-Baghdadi Discusses Pope's Middle East Visit, Jewish-Christian Ties

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

Terrorism : FYI--Al-Baghdadi Discusses Pope's Middle East Visit, Jewish-Christian Ties On 30 May, a forum participant posted to a jihadist website a statement entitled "The Statement of the Amir of the Believers Abu Umar Al-Baghdadi: 'Al-Aqsa Between the Deviation of the Christians and the Deception of the Jews'." The statement contained four links to different format versions of a 40-minute and 3-second audio statement delivered by Abu Umar al-Baghdadi, the amir of the Islamic State of Iraq. In the statement, Al-Baghdadi announces: "I will appear to the whole world when I want to and when it benefits the mujahidin." The audio was released by the Al-Furqan Media Production Establishment, the media arm of the Islamic State of Iraq's Ministry of Information.

A summary of the statement follows:

Abu Umar al-Baghdadi begins his statement by discussing the visit of Pope Benedict to the Middle East and provides a historical accounting of the relationship between the Christians and the Jews. He goes on to say that for the justification of why the pope decided to visit Israel at a time when "a right-wing, fanatical government is in power," one only needs to look at the goals of this government and its true agenda. He states that religious Jews "consider Netanyahu's victory as the first realization of the prophecies of the Torah in Israel." Al-Baghdadi then goes on to discuss the initiative undertaken by Netanyahu's government in 1996 in an attempt to rid Jerusalem of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, concluding this part of the statement by saying that the pope's visit to Israel is considered "strong support for a Jewish government which aims to achieve ambitious, defiant goals."

Al-Baghdadi continues, saying that circumstances in the Arab and Muslim world are very weak now and that the Western world "has reached a point of hysteria in supporting the Jews" but that the Muslims are "coming from Iraq, coming from Khorasan (Afghanistan), coming from Somalia, coming from the Islamic Maghreb, and to beware of those coming from Yemen. Our souls, our children, and our money are all expendable for the sake of Al-Aqsa." He continues by saying that "these are the slogans of the youth who blow themselves up for the sake of God and for the sake of raising the word of God." Al-Baghdadi then states that the pope's visit to Israel "is a humiliation to all Muslims" as a result of his call for peaceful coexistence between the aggressors and the victims, and he goes on to warn the pope that he should now bear the responsibility of any actions that might take place against himself and his people because by his recent actions, he has "canceled any treaties or promises that were in place, just like his predecessor, John Paul II, did." Al-Baghdadi states, "There are churches and leaders and Christians who live on (Muslim) lands, and we are able to direct a clear strike against them that will make them reassess their ill-fated alliance with the Jews."

Regarding the recent claim that he had been taken into custody, Al-Baghdadi goes on to state that "the key purpose of their lie is to force me to appear, undisguised, in a video. This is a stupid trick that will not force me to do anything. I will appear to the whole world when I want to and when it benefits the mujahidin in the midst of the upcoming victory, God willing."

He concludes his statement by condemning the criminal actions of the government of Pakistan against the Muslims of that country.