

FYI -- Al-Sahab Releases Al-Zawahiri Video on Somalia, Yemen, Gaza, Afghanistan

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

On 23 February, a forum participant has been observed to post to a jihadist website several links to a new 25-minute video production by Al-Sahab Media entitled "From Kabul to Mogadishu" issued by Al-Qa'ida Organization's second-in-command Ayman al-Zawahiri. Al-Zawahiri covers many issues, including the most recent developments in Somalia, Yemen, the Arabian Peninsula, Gaza, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

The 25-minute video begins with Al-Zawahiri stating that "numerous fast-moving events have come one after the other in a number of Islamic lands."

He begins by commenting on the two important developments that have taken place recently in Somalia, saying: "The first one is a step on the path of victory for Islam, the empowerment of the Muslims, and the expulsion of the invaders from their land. It is the expansion of the influence of the mujahidin in Somalia, the spreading of the authority of shari'ah, and the expulsion of the invaders -- the enemies of Islam and their agents -- from broad regions of Somalia, among the most important of which is the city of Baidoa."

The second development is the establishment of the government of Shaykh Sharif, which Al-Zawahiri describes as "an act of collusion with the Crusader invaders in launching war on jihad and creating a government which submits to American demands."

Al-Zawahiri accuses the United States and the United Nations of supporting this government in the same way they supported the "treacherous" government of Abdallah Yusuf.

Addressing the mujahidin of Somalia, Al-Zawahiri calls on them to reject this government, saying: "Why have you sacrificed thousands of martyrs for the shari'ah?" He adds: "Why have you sacrificed thousands of martyrs to purify Muslim Somalia from the US Crusader invasion?" Al-Zawahiri harshly criticized the United States and its role in Somalia by saying: "The United States is the enemy of Islam and Muslims; it is the one who killed tens of thousands in Somalia at the hands of its troops and agents."

The video includes old excerpts from statements issued by leaders of Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula, Said al-Shihri and Abu-Basir Nasir al-Wuhayshi, criticizing Arab rulers. Commenting on the recent developments in the Arabian Peninsula and Yemen, Al-Zawahiri says: "It is the awakening which aims to liberate the Arabian Peninsula from the Crusader invaders and their treacherous agents."

Al-Zawahiri urges the tribes of Yemen to help the mujahidin and to oppose President Ali Abdallah Salih, saying: "O noble and defiant tribes of Yemen, how can you agree on turning Yemen into be a supply center for the Crusaders against Muslim countries? How can you agree on allowing the CIA to be the ruling authority in Yemen?"

Then, Al-Zawahiri comments on the situation in Gaza and criticizes the Arab aid to Gaza which "will impose on the people of Gaza a calm that will stop their jihad in exchange for lifting the embargo."

He then says that the "Crusaders and Jewish targets are spread all over the world, and it is not

for the enemy to impose on us the battlefield, venue, time, and way in which we fight him." He also promised that the "mujahidin in the various fronts of jihad against the Crusaders are fully prepared to provide their brothers, the mujahidin in Gaza and everywhere, with all the training and preparation they possibly can; they will spare no effort in that regard."

Concerning Afghanistan and Pakistan, Al-Zawahiri says: "Americans are in a serious predicament."

Addressing the Afghani people, he says: "O defiant Muslim Afghan people: Your brothers in the Taliban are not fighting to liberate Afghanistan only, but also the Taliban in Pakistan are carrying out jihad to purify Pakistan of the United States and its agents in the Pakistani government and Army."

Al-Zawahiri urges the Afghan people to join jihad, saying: "Join your brothers and sons of the Taliban in the jihad against the US Crusader occupation, which insulted the Prophet, peace be upon him, violated the sanctity of the Koran, and desecrated the soil of Afghanistan."