

World's Most Wanted Terrorist: An Interview with Osama bin Laden

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Osama bin Laden speaks during an interview in Afghanistan. The Saudi millionaire had been living in exile in Afghanistan and the Taliban religious army, which rules most of the country, has until now refused to let him make public statements.

Question: You have been charged with masterminding the bombings of the two U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Are these charges true?

Bin Laden: Praise be to God , the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds. Peace and blessings be upon Prophet Muhammad, his companions and his kin. Let me begin by stating that we, in the World Islamic Front for jihad against Jews and Crusaders, have, by the grace of God Almighty, issued a crystal clear fatwa calling on the Nation to carry on jihad aimed at liberating Islamic holy sites, and the Ancient House (The Holy Ka'aba), and Al-Aksa Mosque and all Islamic lands. By the grace of God, Praise and Glory be to him; this Nation, the Nation of Muhammad, God's peace and blessings be upon him, has responded to this appeal and this instigation. We will continue this course because it is a part of our religion, and because God, Praise and Glory be to him, ordered us to carry out jihad so that the word of God may remain exalted to the heights. If the instigation for jihad against the Jews and the Americans, in order to liberate Al-Aksa Mosque, and the Holy Ka'aba, is considered a crime, let history be a witness that I am a criminal.

You warned that Americans would die. Then, two months later, the U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar As Salaam were bombed. Were these bombings because of your fatwa (decree) against America?

Bin Laden: By the Grace of God, Praise and Glory be to him, we have repeatedly issued warnings, over a number of years. Following these warnings and these calls, anti-American explosions took place in a number of Islamic countries. Most probably, these acts came about as a result of such calls and warnings. But only God knows the truth.

If the targets of jihads are Americans, how can the deaths of so many Africans be justified?

Bin Laden: This question pre-supposes that it is me who carried out these explosions. My answer is that I understand the motives of the brothers who carry out acts of jihad against the enemies of the nation, namely the Americans and their supporters.

Killing of Muslims Would be Justified

Suppose that the Americans have attacked an Islamic country and kidnapped my children, the children of Osama bin Laden, to use as a shield, and then started to kill Muslims as is the case in Lebanon, Palestine, and these days in Iraq, and also when they supported the Serbs in massacring the Muslims in Bosnia. According to Islamic jurisprudence if we abstain from firing on the Americans lest we should kill these Muslims (used by them as shields), the harm that could befall Muslims at large, who are being attacked, outweighs the good of saving the lives of these Muslims used as a shields.

This means that in a case like this, when it becomes apparent that it would be impossible to repel these Americans without assaulting them, even if this involved the killing of Muslims, this is permissible under Islam. That is why I do understand the motives of those who carried out these acts. However, radio reports said that most of those killed were members of the American Embassy in Nairobi, which housed the largest C.I.A center in the African continent. We do understand what happened. Many people were saddened by the death of some innocent people outside the embassy building.

The U.S. has also said, in formal charges, that you are in a position to develop chemical weapons and try to purchase nuclear material for weapons. How would such weapons be used?

Bin Laden: This is a multi-dimensional question. It presupposes that I do possess such weapons, and goes on to ask about the way in which we will use them. In answer I would say that acquiring weapons for the defense of Muslims is a religious duty.

To seek to possess the weapons that could counter those of the infidels is a religious duty. If I have indeed acquired these weapons, then this is an obligation I carried out and I thank God for enabling us to do that. And if I seek to acquire these weapons I am carrying out a duty. It would be a sin for Muslims not to try to possess the weapons that would prevent the infidels from inflicting harm on Muslims. But how we could use these weapons if we possess them is up to us.

Lies or Truth?

Muhamad Rashid Al-Owhali has told investigators that he was in your camps and at the press conference you gave last May when you promised that the deserves of fatwa would be seen within the next seven weeks. Then, he says he was given the job of going to Kenya to help carry out the Nairobi bombing. Is he lying? Is he telling the truth?

Bin Laden: As I have stated before, it is our job to instigate (unintelligible). By the Grace of God, we did that, and certain people responded to this instigation. As regards knowing those who attended the meeting referred to, I would say that the number of the brothers is large, thank God, and I do not know everyone who is with us in this base or this organization, let alone the individual Muslims who responded to the call for jihad to liberate the Ancient House (the Ka'aba) and the lands of Islam.

How would you describe the men arrested in Kenya and Tanzania? How many of them do you know?

Bin Laden: Praise be to God. What I know is that those who risked their lives to earn the pleasure of God, Praise and Glory be to him, are the real men, the true personification of the word men, They managed to rid the Islamic nation of disgrace. We highly respect them and hold them in the highest esteem, and pray to God, Praise and Glory be to him, to accept them as martyrs and permit them to intercede on behalf of their kin.

Since the bombings, the U.S. has maintained U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia and recently used them to help in the renewed air strikes in Iraq. What can the U.S. expect from you now?

Bin Laden: The American forces should expect reactions to their actions, from the Muslim world. Any thief or criminal or robber who enters the countries of others in order to steal should expect to be exposed to murder at any time.

For the American forces to expect anything from me personally reflects a very narrow perception of things. There is a nation which compromises 12,000 million Muslims. This nation is angry. The latest events have proven the great extent of the anger of Muslim masses all over the Muslim world. The American forces should expect reactions from the Muslim world which are proportionate to the injustice these forces inflict.

Can you describe the U.S. air strikes on your camps (in Afghanistan, shortly after the embassy bombings)? What did it look like there? What was the effect? And then there were rumors that you were hurt and that you are sick now. Do you have a problem like cancer?

Bin Laden: Praise be to God for good health, and the blessing of Islam. As for the American bombardment, it has only shown that the world is governed by the law of the jungle.

Before the investigations in the Nairobi explosion, and even on the same day when the person in charge of the investigation team traveled to Nairobi to complete the investigation, an Islamic country, namely Afghanistan, was bombarded without any justification. That brutal, treacherous attack killed a number of civilian Muslims in the province of Bachtiry.

Some of our camps suffered minor damage. You personally have visited the camp and know that. Seven of our brothers were killed. These include three from Yemen, namely brother Bashir Al-Awady, brother Abu-jihad and brother Abdallah Zarif, and two from Egypt namely brother Siddik and brother Hamdi and a brother from Al-Madina Al-Munawwarah, namely Zeid bin Abdel Karim Salah Musaddakani, and another brother from Turkey.

We pray to God, Praise and Glory be to him, to accept them as martyrs. A similar number of our Pakistani brothers were also killed. Some 20-something Afghans were killed. These were living in nearby towns and villages. May God accept all of them as martyrs. As for the material damage, it was minimal. By the Grace of God, the missiles were ineffective. The raid has also proven that the American army is going down hill in its morale. Its members are too cowardly and too fearful to meet the young people of Islam face to face.

After the missile attack on your camp, you sent word to me, "The war has just begun. America should await the answer." Since then, the U.S. has been able to prevent several attacks on U.S. embassies. What will be next?

Bin Laden: As I said before, for each action, there is a reaction. Thanks to our understanding of the Muslim nation, and our contacts with Muslim masses, we feel how angry they are at the bombardment. This anger was reflected in what took place, in the aftermath of the bombardment, all over the Islamic world.

We feel that there are strong and wide reactions. We are confident in the abilities of this Nation of Muhammad. We pray to God, Praise and Glory be to him, to help Muslims expel the Americans and Jews from Islamic countries.

Who are these men? Most of them said they were in your camps and inspired by your messages. Some of them said they were acting directly on your behalf. Wadih el-Hage said he was once your personal assistant.

Number one, is who is Wadih el-Hage, who says he was once your personal aide? Number two is Fasil Abdul lom Harrid (phonetic) also known as Haroun Fasid? Number three is

Mohamad Sadique Odeh, who told authorities that he was part of your group and was a key player in the Kenya bombing. Number four is Muhamad Rashid Al-Owhali , was says he was at your press conference on the fatwa and that he (intelligible) shortly to help with the Kenya bombing. Number five is Mamoul Saleed, who was captured in Germany. The police say he was a close associate of yours. And was he in Germany to organize an attack on the embassy?

Bin Laden: As for brother Wadih el-Hage, he is one of our brothers whom God, Praise and Glory be to him, was kind enough to steer them to the path of participating in relief work for Afghan refugees and in providing support for Muslims in Afghanistan. We pray to God, Praise and Glory be to him, to accept his good deeds. I still remember him, though I have not seen him or heard from him for many years.

He had nothing to do with the allegations attributed to him by the United States of America. As for Mr. Muhamad Rashid Al-Owhali we were informed that he is a Saudi from the province of Wajd. In your question, you said he was among those who attended my press conference. And I have already told you that I can not possibly know every one who attended that conference.

Mr. Mamdouh Fahim is a righteous Sheik, who memorizes the holy Koran and God has endowed him with a melodious voice which stirs people's feelings when he recites from the Koran. He was our Imam in Peshawar. He had worked for a long time with Islamic relief organizations operating from Pakistan. We had a good relationship with him during that phase. He was never a member of any jihad organization. He is not a member of the base. The fact of the matter is that America, and in particular the C.I.A., wanted to cover up their failure, in the aftermath of the big events that took place in Riyadh, Khobar, Nairobi, Tanzania, Capetown, Campala, and other places, God willing, in the future.

They wanted to cover-up their failure by arresting any person who had participated, at any point in the past, in the Islamic jihad in Afghanistan. He is innocent, He has nothing to do with anything. We pray to God, Praise and Glory be to him, to end their plight, and we are confident that they will be exonerated.

And, also, this is the next question, there have been no direct attacks on western troops in Saudi Arabia although you (unintelligible) the Saudi people which forced them to pull out from the kingdom.

Bin Laden: As regards the contacts with the Saudi government, I would like to state that the Saudi government initiated contacts during the last period in the Sudan. They sent several delegations to enter into negotiations aimed at convincing me to keep silent on the unjust American occupation of the land of the two mosques. (Saudi Arabia is home to mosques considered the holiest in the Islamic religion.)

By the grace of God, Praise and Glory be to him, we were able to reject these attempts. As for Prince Turki bin Faisal, director of the Saudi Intelligence Service, he came to Kandahar several times and met with the Commander of the Believers, Mullah Muhammed Omar. He asked him to surrender us to him or to expel us from Afghanistan.

The visits and the requests were met by great surprise, specially when Prince Turki came to Afghanistan, in the aftermath of the explosions in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salam. Even if there was a relationship between myself and those who carried out the explosions, it is now of the business of the Saudi regime to come and ask for handing over Osama bin Laden, who was stripped of his

(Saudi) identification card which is his right by birth, and whose assets were frozen, and who was forced to sever all relations with his kin.

This was met by great surprise on the part of the Taliban state (Afghanistan). They had expected that the American government would be the one to come back to them after the failure of the last visit by (U.S. envoy) Mr. Richardson, who was rebuffed by the Taliban, may God give them the rewards they deserve. Price Turki also returned empty handed. It was as if he came as an envoy of the American government.

'Muslims Have Joined'

I would also like to add that our work targets world infidels in the first place. Our enemy is the crusader alliance led by America, Britain and Israel. It is a crusader-Jewish alliance. However, some regimes in the Arab and Muslim worlds have joined that alliance, preventing us Muslims from defending the holy Ka'aba. Our hostility is in the first place, and to the greatest extent, leveled against these world infidels, and by necessity the regimes which have turned themselves into tools for this occupation of the greatest House in the Universe and the first House of Worship appointed for men.

Has the latest attack on Iraq proved the contention that they are the enemies of Islam and Muslims. Don't you think that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein also has a role in inflicting suffering and misery on Iraqi people?

And I will add to this question: Where is it that the people in the Muslim and Islamic countries are demonstrating against the U.S. and British attack on Iraq, but the governments of the same Islamic countries are either neutral or less critical on the attack on Iraq?

Bin Laden: There is no doubt that the treacherous attack perpetrated a few days ago against the Muslim people of Iraq by the United States and Britain has confirmed several things, the most important of which is that Britain and America are acting on behalf of Israel and the Jews, to strike at any power in the Islamic world, with a view to paving the way for the Jews to divide the Muslim world once again and enslave it and boost the rest of its wealth.

As is known, a great part of the force that carried out the attack came from certain Gulf countries, which underlined the fact that these countries have lost their sovereignty. Now, infidels walk everywhere on the land where Muhammed, God's Peace and blessing be upon him, was born, and where the Koran was revealed to him through Gabriel, peace be upon him. This happens while our scholars and Ulemas, who are the heirs of prophets, are in jail.

These Ulemas are jailed while infidels, be they Jews or Christians, are free to go wherever they want in these countries. The situation is very serious. From here, I call on all Muslims to make it possible for a number of good scholars, merchants and notables, intellectuals and heads of tribes to form a leadership for resisting this crusader-Jewish invasion. The rulers have become powerless.

The price would be paid by Muslims and the peoples of that region. Many of these rulers could face the fate of the Shah of Iran, who was forced to leave with his family and go to Egypt. The people are the ones who will pay the price. Unless the good and righteous people come forward to defend God, Ka'aba and God's religion as they defend themselves and Muslim women, everything will perish, be it religious or secular. But, by the Grace of God victory will be

the lot of Muslim peoples, as of the regimes, it has been proven beyond any doubt that they are useless and don't care for anybody. Under these circumstances, Muslims should carry out their obligations, since the rulers of the region have accepted the invasion of their countries. But these countries belong to Islam and not to those rulers. May God exact his revenge against all of them.

Since first launching the Islamic front against the U.S. and Israel, has there been any formal meeting of the front and is it possible for you to keep in touch with the people and how many Islamic groups are joining this front?

And in addition, I will ask that besides your fight against Israel and the U.S., does your front also believe in fighting and overthrowing the pro-western governments in the Islamic countries?

Bin Laden: Praise be to God. By the Grace of God, Praise and Glory be to him, this front has been established as the first step to pool together the energies and concentrate efforts against the infidels represented in the Jewish-crusader alliance, thus replacing splinter and subsidiary fronts.

Many gains have been achieved. We pray to God, Praise and Glory be to him, to bless these gains and augment them. This front meets from time to time, as necessary, in emergency meetings, in addition to its regular meetings. I cannot give you more details for reasons of necessity. The main focus of the front, as its name indicates, is the Jews and crusaders because they are the biggest enemy. The main effort, at this phase, must target the Jews and the crusaders.

The U.S. government says it is trying to stop the flow of funds to your organization. Has it been able to do so and can it do so?

Bin Laden: The United States of America knows that I have attacked it, by the Grace of God, for more than ten years now. The Americans have pressured certain countries in the region, causing us some embarrassment and some difficulties. These included the freezing of assets and driving me out of some of these lands.

The United States alleges that I am fully responsible for the killing of its soldiers in Somalia. God knows that we have been pleased at the killing of the American soldiers in Somalia. This was achieved by the Grace of God and the efforts of the Mujahadeen from among the Somali bothers and other Arab Mujahadeen who have been in Afghanistan before that.

Though these events took place several years ago, and America has been trying ever since to tighten its economic blockade against us, and to arrest me personally, it has failed in achieving its objective. As for being driven from one land to another, this is the nature of war. You win some and you lose some. By the Grace of God, Praise and Glory be to him, Muslims were able to defeat and force them out of Somalia, as they expelled them before, from Aden. This blockade and this tightening doesn't hurt us much. We expect to be rewarded by God, Praise and Glory to him.

You have become your own model for Muslims and, in Pakistan, a number of couples have named their sons Osama. Does this make you happy? Do you think that your Islamic message is having an impact and, secondly, it is said that developments like the recent U.S.-British air

strikes on Iraq will create many more Osamas and already, it is said, that Osama is not the name of a person but a movement. Please comment.

Bin Laden: Praise be to God. There is no doubt that we have been pleased and heartened by the wide-spread Islamic response across the whole Muslim world, and in particular, on the part of the people of Pakistan. They have been very effective in their movement and that was by the Grace of God.

As regards your reference to parents naming their sons after me, I would like to tell you that I was named after one of the venerable companions of the prophet, namely Osama bin-Zeid, may God be pleased with him and with them. He was someone whom the prophet, God's peace and blessings be upon him, has loved and has loved his father before him.

When people call their children Osama, we consider that they do that after the venerable companion of the Prophet, God's peace and blessings be upon him. It is also an indication of the response of Muslims and their support of the jihad against the Americans in order to liberate Islam's holy places.

In answer to the second part of the question I would tell you that the winds of change have blown in order to lift the injustice to which the world is subjected by America and its supporters and the Jews, and those who are collaborating with them. Look at what is happening these days in Jakarta, in Indonesia, where Suharto, a despot who ruled for over thirty years, was overthrown. He was an oppressor who inflicted injustice and robbed the nation. During his reign the media glorified him, depicting him as the best president.

The media in the Arab countries, regrettably, is doing the same these days. But things will change. The time will come, sooner than later, by the Grace of God, when criminal despots who betrayed God and his prophet, God's peace and blessings upon him, and betrayed their trust and their nation, will face the same fate and be subjected to questioning in order to restore right so that everybody may get their dues.

A number of people in the Muslim countries like you, but they have reservations and objections in your use of force to achieve your Islamic objectives. Please comment.

Bin Laden: Praise be to God. We should fully understand our religion. The good is that which the religion considers good and the ugly is that which is considered ugly by the religion. When God, Praise and Glory be to him, ordered us to carry out jihad and ordered us to kill and to fight, he said in his holy Koran "fight them, and God will punish them by your hands, cover them with shame, help you (to victory) over them, and heal the hearts of the believers."

Fighting is a part of our religion and our Shari'a. Those who love God and his prophet and this religion may not deny a part of that religion. This is a very serious matter. Whoever denies even a very minor tenet of religion would have committed the gravest sin in Islam. Such persons must renew their faith and rededicate themselves to their religion.

Jihad is part of our religion and no Muslim may say that he does not want to do jihad in the cause of God, Praise and Glory be to him. These are the tenets of our religion and we ask, "Is there another way to repel the infidels?" God almighty has said in his holy book "Then, fight in God's cause—Thou art held responsible only for thyself—and rouse the believers. It may be that

God will restrain the fury of the non-believers; for God is the strongest in might and in punishment.”

Pushing back the assault of the non-believers can only be achieved through jihad. Those who sympathize with the infidels, such as the PLO in Palestine, or the so-called Palestinian Authority, have been trying for tens of years to get back some of their rights, and they laid down their arms and abandoned what is called “violence” these days and ran after peaceful bargaining, but what did the Jews give them? They did not give them even 1% of their rights. Even the Gaza Airport and the so-called Palestinian Authority are under the mercy of their guns and under the control of the Jewish security forces. This shows that the right path is that which God has ordained. God, Praise and Glory be to him, has prohibited the killing of women and children unless the women are active fighters.

You have been labeled as “Public Enemy number 1” by the U.S. government. Do you deserve this label? And, secondly, how can a person who is on the run and who is being pursued come to attack the world’s only “Superpower”?

Bin Laden: Hostility towards America is a religious duty and we hope to be rewarded for its by God, Praise and Glory be to him. Praise be to God for guiding us to do jihad in his cause. To call us enemy number one or number two doesn’t hurt us. What we do care for is to please God, Praise and Glory be to him, by doing jihad in his cause and by liberating Islam’s holy places from those wretched cowards.

‘End of the Superpower’

America will be mistaken if it thought that Osama bin Laden can fight such a great country. But Osama bin Laden is confident that, by the Grace of God, Praise and Glory be to Him, the Islamic nation will carry out this duty. I have been here for a few years and I have not left Afghanistan. But I am confident that Muslims and this nation of 12,000 million Muslims, will, God willing, be able by counting on the help of God to end the legend of the so-called superpower that is America.

You (unintelligible) from issuing statements by the Taliban and Mullah Mohammed Omar said that there cannot exist two (unintelligible) in Afghanistan. Were you unhappy, were you offended by this order by Taliban and, secondly, will you abide by it in the future?

Bin Laden: The emir of the faithful, Mullah Mohammed Omar, managed, by the Grace of God, to save Islamic jihad in Afghanistan after great sacrifices by the Muslim people. At one point, Afghanistan was divided into five mini-states; a mini-state in the east consisting of some provinces, headed by Kadir, and a mini-state in the west comprised of three or four provinces, under the leadership of Muhammad Ismail Khan, a mini-state in the north consisting of three or four provinces, headed by Dostum, the communist who was supported by the Russians, during the days of jihad and also in recent times, a mini-state in the middle headed by Najib, the former communist President who had as partners Ahmad Shah Masoud and his collaborators, and mini-state in the south, which comprised the province of Kandahar and a few neighboring provinces and was headed by Mullah Muhammad Omar.

America managed, through its agents and especially some Arab countries and Pakistan, to perpetuate the division of the strongest Islamic people in this region, a people that was able to turn the Soviet Union into a myth. Some of these mini-states had mini-states with them

controlled by some people who succumbed to the temptation of Satan and engaged in highway robbery and banditing using light and heavy weapons.

Then God bestowed his favors on Muslims guiding them to the application of Shari'a, which was a sign from God Almighty. Bandits and highway robbers fled. These great achievements were, by the Grace of God, the result of an internal pull and not the result of pressure from abroad, as the media has been trying to portray, suggesting that the Taliban are American or Pakistani agents. Recent events witnessed by all show that the Islamic Party led by Hekmatyar has been the strongest party in Afghanistan throughout the period of jihad in numbers, military hardware and in terms of organization and planning.

It used to receive direct assistance from Pakistan. This force stayed at the outskirts of Kabul for four years and was unable to gain an inch. How then, can your students, with little experience, some of whom have only engaged in battles when the Commander of the faithful raised the banner of jihad; how can such people sweep the big provinces, including the Kabul province, in a week's time?

They managed to take over the provinces of Minbarhar, Laghban, Konar and Kabul within one week. It was a victory granted by God, Praise and Glory be to him. As I said before, this was assisted by an internal pull. Many a tribe that had suffered from the injustices inflicted by the bandits and former parties would send their students to ask the Taliban leadership to come and take over the provinces of such tribes.

The Taliban state has been subjected to great pressured by Russia and its agents, with the support of the communists and by America, through its agents in the Arab region and Pakistan, in order to silence me. This bargaining has been going on for a long time. It dates back to the time when I was in my homeland and when I was in the Sudan. This American pressure kept following me until I reached Afghanistan. The Commander of the faithful is the only legitimate ruler of the state of Afghanistan, where God, Praise and Glory be to him, has guided the steps of Muslims so that an Islamic country can be ruled by God's Shari'a for the first time in tens of years.

The people of Afghanistan now enjoy the security which they thought they would not see for tens of years to come. He ordered us not to use the territory of Afghanistan against anybody else. We pray to God, Praise and Glory be to him, to provide us and the Commander of the faithful with (unintelligible) and a way out, so that at one point, God Almighty will enable us to do our duty in support of this religion with all our abilities.

However, despite the circumstances surrounding us, we, by the Grace of God, shall continue to instigate the Nation. We are confident that the Nation will do its duty against America and its supporters. Of course those who produce oil and the big powers can haggle over the Muslims' religion. But, by the Grace of God, the Taliban State and the Commander of the faithful were granted courage by God Almighty, that enabled them to resist all these pressures, and turn back all these delegations, notwithstanding their bargaining aimed at expelling us or handing us over, and we thank God for that. May God, Praise and Glory be to him, keep our feet and those of the Taliban firm and strong. They have taken these principled positions which are dictated by this great faith. Theirs are not political stances as the others depict.

Praise by to God. It is no secret that the Muslim world is being subjected these day to a ferocious crusader-Jewish offensive. If we look at the Muslim world, we will find out that

pressures are being exercised against Pakistan. These are economic pressures in the first place. This of course is due to the fact that Pakistan now possesses nuclear weapons.

As is known, Osama bin Laden is not in Pakistan. If we look at Afghanistan, we will find out that it has been subjected to pressures even before the arrival of Osama bin Laden. Afghanistan was pressured because it has raised the banner of “There is no God but Allah, and Muhammed is the prophet of Allah.”

Should you look at the other parts of the map, you will see Iran for example. Iran has been under pressure for 20 years now, because it left the American orbit, and stopped following American orders as was the case under the Shah. Look at Iraq. At one point it was given support to attack Iran when it got away from American hegemony. But when Iraq managed to acquire some strength, it is now being heavily bombarded. The people of Iraq are being crushed, while the media tries to draw attention to some aspects of the conduct of Saddam Hussein, although a few thousand Iraqi Muslims die everyday.

Look at Syria. It has been placed on the black list for several years because it supports some Palestinian Mujahadeen who resist the Jews in Palestine. Take Lebanon. It also is occupied by this crusader-Jewish alliance. Today, news reports spoke of the killing of a mother and six of her children yesterday in an Israeli attack against civilians, including women and children. Of course the media doesn't criticize such actions. If such an act was carried out by a Muslim young man, by mistake, the media would be defaming Muslims for a whole month. Take Palestine. It is totally occupied. Jordan has American bases and American planes occupying it.

Egypt also has a number of American bases. The six Gulf States are all occupied by American bases. In the case of Sudan, Osama bin Laden left the Sudan three or four years ago. But up until now, pressures are being exercised and attempts being made to overthrow the government because it has raised the banner of the call for the application of Shari'a, although it has not completed the required steps for the application of Shari'a.

Plots continue and countless Muslims are being killed in the Sudan and in the south of Sudan. What happened in Somalia was a blatant invasion under the eyes of the whole world. Somalia was occupied for crusader-colonialist purposes. In Libya, a whole people have been starved for years, based on accusations which are, on the whole, baseless and false. This is also an aggression against Muslims.

That is how America treats the Muslim world. It is not true that Afghanistan is being pressured because of the presence of Osama bin Laden. The whole Islamic world is being pressured. There is a design aimed at redividing the Muslim world, similar to what happened in Afghanistan when it was divided into five mini-states.

'Plan' to Divide Islamic World

These days, there is also a plan to divide Iraq into three—one in the north for Muslim kurds, a state in the middle, and a third in the south. The same applies to the land of the two mosques (Saudi Arabia) where there is a plan to divide it into a state for the two mosques, another state for oil in the eastern region, and a state in the middle. This would make the people of the two mosques always busy trying to earn a living, and would leave a few people in the oil region who can be easily controlled. This is a world design and Muslims should not focus on side effects. They should unify their ranks to be able to resist this occupation.

Praise be to God. Only God provides sustenance. Muslims believe that a lifetime is pre-determined and nobody can change it or push it forward or backward. Sustenance is also pre-determined. Nothing can increase it or decrease it. Sustenance is ordained when a person is still in the womb. Man should seek sustenance only from God, Praise and Glory be to him, and God has ordered us to ask him for our sustenance.

But to count of these non-believers, who steal the wealth of Muslims then give back some crumbs to certain Islamic states or mini-states reflects a flawed understanding of their duties. Look at Bangladesh for example. It is classified as one of the poorest countries in the world, and Osama bin Laden doesn't live there. It is only God who provides food against hunger and security against fear. If people truly worshipped God, he will provide them with sustenance. God, Praise and Glory be to him, said in his holy Book "And in heaven is your Sustenance, as also that which ye one promised."

He also said "Let them worship the Lord of the House, who provides them with food against hunger, and with security against fear."

People should worship God, Praise and Glory be to him, and pray to him, then work hard and seek sustenance anywhere on earth as they were ordered. As for Pakistan, there are some governmental departments, which, lay the Grace of God, respond to the Islamic sentiments of the masses in Pakistan. This is reflected in sympathy and cooperation. However, some other governmental departments fell into the trap of the infidels who committed aggression against the Ancient House and the Holy Ka'aba.

We pray to God, Praise and Glory be to him, to return them smoothly to the right path. We also pray to God, Praise and Glory be to him, to frustrate the evil designs of those who harbor any ill will towards Islam, and to afflict them with calamities that would make them too busy to think of hurting Muslims. As for the Taliban, we pray to God to keep their feet firm, and guide them on the right path. In our opinion, their positions are firm, right and principled. Those are not political stands or positions taken as a bargaining chip.

16:26:00 Do you have any option if the Taliban asks you to leave Afghanistan? Which country can accept you and where can you be saved? And, secondly, do you expect any more attacks on Afghanistan by the U.S. and the western countries in case you keep living in Afghanistan?

Bin Laden: Praise be to God. Leaving Afghanistan is not something that we foresee. As for security and peace of mind, we are all the servants of God, Praise and Glory be to him, and he has prescribed for us killing and fighting.

This is an honor bestowed by God, Praise and Glory be to him, on whoever from among his servants, he wants to support his religion. On this land and by the Grace of God, Praise and Glory be to him, I feel the great significance and the great meaning of this blessed migration in the cause of God, Praise and Glory be to him. We do not expect to be driven out of this land. God's earth is large and wide. Whatever God has ordained, he has always in the past given us the ability to be patient and accept whatever he has ordained for us. A true Muslim should thank God in Prosperity and be patient in adversity. This is good for him in both cases. When a Muslim migrates repeatedly he is doubly rewarded. We pray to God, Praise and Glory be to him, to make our migration, a migration in his cause.

As for the other part of the question, namely if we expect any attacks against Afghanistan, as I have said before, any attack against Afghanistan does not target an individual. It would not target the Commander of the faithful, Mullah Muhammed Omar personally, or Osama bin Muhammed bin Laden personally. But the fact is that Afghanistan, having raised the banner of Islam, and started to seek to apply the Shari'a of Islam, by the Grace of God, has become a target of the crusader-Jewish alliance.

'We Expect More Bombs'

We expect Afghanistan to be bombarded, even though the non-believers would say that they do that because of the presence of Osama. That is why we together with our brother live on these mountains, far away from Muslims in villages and towns in order to spare them any harm. As for us, as I have said, killing and fighting have been prescribed for us, by the Grace of God, who says in his holy book "fighting is prescribed for you, and ye dislike it. But it is possible that ye dislike a thing, which is good for you, and that ye love a thing which is bad for you. But God knoweth and you know not."

We expect attacks that would target Afghanistan as a Muslim nation, or rather the only state in this age which started to apply Islam, and all Muslims should support it. It is the state of scholars. All Muslims should focus their efforts, in terms of relief, the call for God's path, and in terms of knowledge, in support of this state. Muslims and Muslim merchants, in particular, should give their zakat and their money in support of this state which is reminiscent of the state of Medina (Al- Munawwarah), where the followers of Islam embraced the Prophet of God, God's blessings and peace be upon him, and that was the beginning of the spread of Islam.

It was reported that you were attacked somewhere in (unintelligible) and that the Taliban was able to arrest your attackers. Is it true? And, secondly, has there been any attempt on your life in Afghanistan?

Bin Laden: Praise be to God. An attempt on my life took place when the Saudi regime sent a number of people, who, though were born in the land of the two mosques (Saudi Arabia), were deprived of citizenship. The Saudi regime exploited this weakness and offered them large sums of money in return for trying to assassinate me.

By the Grace of God, Praise and Glory be to him, the Taliban were able to arrest one of them. His name is Saddik Ahwad. He confessed that Prince Salman bin-Abdel Aziz, the brother of the current king of the land of the two mosques, has promised to give him citizenship and a million rials if he was able, together with two other colleagues of his, to assassinate Osama bin-laden. We were not hurt. For us God suffices and as I said life-time is pre-ordained.

The former (unintelligible) of a mujahedeen group has said that you are enrolled in activities, and they are also calling for your expulsion from Afghanistan. Is it because you are really close to the Taliban or because (unintelligible) wants the support of the U.S. and Western governments?

Bin Laden: As regards former mujahedeen, God, Praise and Glory be to him, has given them the privilege of raising the banner of jihad against the Soviet Union, which was the strongest power known to humanity in modern history. This atheist power was crushed. We pray to God, Praise and Glory be to him, to reward those who carried out jihad during that period. We have been saddened by the fact that some of those who participated in jihad during that important phase,

have stumbled, were attracted by the lure of authority, and said things that hurt them and hurt the reputation of Muslims and the mujahedeen. I can only say: for us God suffices, and he is the best disposer of affairs.

And last question, have you got any message for the Muslims in the world?

Bin Laden: These days, we, as a nation, are being subjected to an unprecedented offensive. We migrated for one reason: the pleasure of God and to defend the religion of God, Praise and Glory be to him, and to liberate holy Ka'aba, to liberate the Ancient House, from the crusaders, and to liberate Al-Aksa Mosque and Palestine from the Jews.

This Ancient House is the center of attraction of people on this earth, physically and intellectually. Our life on this planet would be meaningless, if we do not worship the God of the Ancient House. God, Praise and Glory be to him, will not accept our prayers unless we are facing the Ka'aba. God, Praise and Glory be to him, attributed this holy Ka'aba, this Ancient House to himself as a sign of glorification and honor for the holy Ka'aba. Abraham, peace be upon him said "O our Lord, I have made some of my offspring to dwell in a valley without cultivation, by thy Sacred House."

Abraham attributed the Ancient House to God, Praise and Glory be to him. God also identified himself as the Lord of the Ancient House, when he said "Let them worship the Lord of this House, who provides them with food against hunger, and with security against fear."

These verses show the extent of the greatness of that House, in the eyes of God, Praise and Glory be to him. It was the first house of worship appointed for man. God, Praise and Glory be to him, ordained that prayers cannot be accepted unless we face the holy Ka'aba. Also, the fifth pillar of Islam, namely hajj (pilgrimage) has (unintelligible) compassing the Ka'aba as an essential rite. Since our Prophet, Muhammad, God's peace and blessings be upon him, was sent with his message, the holy Ka'aba was never occupied. This shame and dishonor has only afflicted people of this time.

If we were not to defend God's Ka'aba and God's Ancient House, how and for what else are we to do anything to please our God, Praise and Glory be to him. God almighty has told us in his holy book what happened to the Christians, who came from Ethiopia in an attempt to damage the Ancient House. Abraham came, together with 60,000 Ethiopian Christians for this purpose. God revealed a short, but great Surah in which God, Praise and Glory be to him, shows his love for that Ancient House. God, Praise and Glory be to him, said in his holy book "Seest thou not how thy Lord dealt with the companions of the Elephant? Did He not make their treacherous plan go astray? And He sent against them flights of birds striking them with stones of baked clay Then did He make them like an empty field of stalks and straw of which the corn has been eaten up."

Whoever wants to harm this Ancient House, and whoever wants to let down this Ancient House, their designs will go astray, as God, Praise and Glory be to him, has indicated. I would tell the Muslims to get rid of illusions, read and understand the Book of God, Praise and Glory be to him. They should also read the interpretations of this great Koran as contained, for example in the abridged interpretation of Ibn Katheu, may God bless his soul and that of Muhammad El-Raedy.

May God bless their souls. Muslims should consider with care the verses on loyalty, faith and jihad. They should sever any relations with the Jews and the Christians. That is of God, Praise and Glory be to him, in his holy Koran. God almighty says “Ye who believe, take not the Jews and the Christians for your friends and protectors; They are but friends and protectors to each other. And he amongst you that turns to them for friendship is of them, verily God guideth not a people unjust” and “Those in whose hearts is a disease thou seest how eagerly they run about amongst them saying, ‘We do fear lest a change of fortune bring us disaster.’ Ah, perhaps God will give (Thee) victory, or a decision according to his will. Then will they repent of the thoughts which they secretly harbored in their hearts.”

This text shows that whoever befriends Jews and Christians becomes like them, and becomes one of them in their religion and in their infidelity. God, Praise and Glory be to him, indicated in many verses that whoever befriends the infidels becomes one of them. God, Praise and Glory be to him “To the hypocrites give the glad tidings that there is for them but a gracious penalty.”

“Yea, to those who take for friends unbelievers, rather than believers; Is it honor they seek among them? All honor is with God.” That is why I advise Muslims not to count on present regimes. Instead, they should defend their religion and themselves and the sanctuaries of Muslims. They should consider with care the orders of God, Praise and Glory be to him, to the Companions of the prophet, to do jihad and how he blamed them when they slowed down.

He said in his holy book “ye who believe, what is the matter with you that, when you are asked to go forth in the cause of God, ye cling heavily to the earth? Do you prefer the life of this world to the hereafter? But little is the comfort of this life, as compared with the hereafter.” And God also says “when at last the order for fighting was issued to them, behold, a section of them feared men as much or even more than they should have feared God.”

They said “our Lord, why has thou ordered us to fight? Wouldn't thou not grant us respite to our natural term, near enough.” This is a great calamity that has afflicted people these days. They say it would be better to delay jihad. Now is not the right time for jihad. God, Praise and Glory be to him, taught us the answer.

Whatever their reasons, the main reason is their attachment to this life. God says “Say, short is the enjoyment of this world. The hereafter is the best for thou who do right. Never will ye be dealt with unjustly in the very least.” The enjoyment of this world is short since God, Praise and Glory be to him, created earth and until he inherits it. That is why Muslims should take comfort in expecting the pleasure of God and their rewards in God's paradise. As the poet says: There is no good in this life for anyone who will have no place in God's paradise in the hereafter. For those who like this life I say enjoyment of life is indeed short and death is near. May God, Praise and Glory be to him, give us faith and peace of mind, and help us do his orders and avoid his prohibitions. And God's peace and blessings be on our prophet Muhammed, and I conclude by praising God, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds.